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"How We Fail God"

JOHN HEUSS

I SOMETIMES think that the most terrifying scene in the whole Passion comes in the moment when "the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter."

In that look was concentrated all of God's bitter realization of the failure of mankind. Here, for one fleeting instant in time, is revealed God's age-long frustration when faced with the sin of man. For once, God does not act or speak. He does not condemn nor does He encourage. All that He does is look. And in that look is focused all His sorrow, amazement, and compassion. . . . For a brief second all time stands still, as the Creator looks at what He has created. The only person who sees what is in those eyes is Peter. Is it any wonder that he "went out and wept bitterly"?

And yet we need to remember that it was not Peter that God was looking at! He was looking at mankind. He was looking at every man since Adam. He was looking at the sorry thing His creation had become as it reached feebly upward, groping for perfection, and slithered backward, down toward the earth's primeval slime from whence it had come. He was looking at the most promising and, also, the most irritating thing He had created. He was looking straight at you and me.

What do you suppose it was that redeemed us in the eyes of God? What made Him turn His look from Peter and determine that mankind must be saved? . . . It was not what we are, but what we can become! It was not as He saw us at that moment, but as He saw our human nature as it is in His beloved Son.

—*Do You Want Inward Power?* By John Heuss.
Greenwich: The Seabury Press, 1953, pp. 156-8,
Used by permission of the publisher.

Issues Between Catholics and Protestants at Midcentury

From GEORGE HUNTSTON WILLIAMS

UP TO THE PRESENT there is almost no theological contact between Catholicism and Protestantism in the American setting. If, in contrast, we were to discuss Catholic-Protestant relations in contemporary Europe, particularly on the Continent, we should expect to dwell at length upon the several efforts at theological conversation across the gulf that separates the two confessions. The war-time solidarity of Catholics and Protestants in the anti-Nazi underground made vital a recovered sense of the *Una Sancta*. As a consequence of this rapprochement, only temporarily checked by the papal warning *Humani generis* (1950), European Christians are much more disposed than are we to explore our theological relationship. Over here, we are largely confined to collaboration or confrontation in almost exclusively constitutional, political, organizational, and cultural terms. And thus the American discussion unfolds more in the spirit of the *Kulturkampf* of the age of Bismarck than in the collaborative spirit of the era of Adenauer's Christian Democracy.

To be sure, the American interchange has not yet assumed the acrimonious intensity of that earlier Cultural Conflict. And now that we are today in a position to reassess the issues at stake in the earlier *Kulturkampf*, the moderates on either side in the United States are as yet unwilling to interpret the present struggle in terms of black and white.

These moderates on either side are endeavoring to find their way to what is being called for the purpose of the present survey the middle ground of "Critical Pluralism" as distinguished from the traditional and allegedly programmatic "Political Confessionalism" on the Catholic right and, on the Protestant left, "Idealistic Secularism." These three positions will be more fully characterized at a later point in the survey.

In concentrating on the middle ground of Critical Pluralism, and indeed only on that portion of it where Protestants and Catholics are or

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could be in contact, we may be content with a bare summary of the succession of excitive events and issues which have intensified the Catholic-Protestant debate since the end of the War.

I. SEVEN AREAS OF CONFLICT

In the Cultural Conflict during this period (1945-1954) ecclesio-political skirmishes have flared up principally in seven areas. The first concerns the treatment of Protestants in countries where Catholic Political Confessionalism survives more or less intact or indeed with renewed vigor or virulence: in the Spain of Franco and Cardinal Segura; in the Rome of Cardinal Ottaviani whose unmitigated apologia for the Spanish establishment was declared "unexceptionable" (July, 1953); in the Rome of Premier de Gasperi whose government, despite certain Allied-imposed constitutional safeguards, permitted Protestants to be seriously restricted; and especially in Colombia where Protestants have been violently persecuted.

The second concerns the diplomatic recognition of the Vatican. Protestant insistence on the discontinuance of the war-time "personal" ambassadorship of Myron Taylor was followed by intensified agitation when President Truman near the close of his administration (October, 1951) appointed General Mark Clark as full ambassador to the Vatican, but ineffectually, because, as it turned out, Clark was unwilling to lay down his military command pending Senatorial confirmation.¹ Closely related to this agitation was the widespread protest against the "dual citizenship" of Archbishop Gerald O'Hara (Savannah-Atlanta), since 1951 papal nuncio to the Republic of Ireland. It was publicist Paul Blanshard who called attention to the illegality of the archbishop's status by appealing, ironically, to the exclusive terms of the McCarran Act.² On a still deeper level is the uneasy feeling that our State Department, drawing rather heavily on Georgetown for personnel, is often very easily convinced that the goals of Vatican and American diplomacy are identical.

The third area of controversy is over the comparative loyalty of Protestants and Catholics to democracy and to the nation. In the debate both democracy and Americanism have been subject to conflicting definition and redefinition. Not perhaps since the days of the Know-Nothing Party has religious affiliation been so prominent in the discussion of civic loyalty and patriotism. The main development here has been the emergence of Senator Joseph McCarthy. But only with the publication of

¹ The most representative summation of Protestant opposition to the appointment is to be found in "An American Ambassador at the Vatican," *The Christian Century*, LXVIII (1951), 1272. Cf. also W. E. Garrison, "Vatican Embassy," *ibid.*, 1308.

² "The Case of Archbishop O'Hara," *Christian Century*, LXX (1953), 539.

J. B. Matthews' charge against Protestant clergymen³ and the public hearing of Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam has the controversy become avowedly confessional. Joseph Harsch,⁴ pointing out the proportionately higher dismissal of Protestants from government, allegedly as "security risks," has intensified the debate. The three works of Paul Blanshard composed during the period under consideration, though they disavowed any criticism of authoritarian dogma as the basis of a religious faith, have been outspoken in charging an authoritarian hierarchy as at once un-American and undemocratic.

The fourth sector in which a long series of skirmishes are recorded is in the area of education. The principal events here in the period under consideration have been the Everson decision of the Supreme Court granting the use of public school busses to parochial school pupils (1947), the McCollum decision which declared unconstitutional the program of released-time religious education within public school precincts (1948), the controversy over the Barden Bill and the skirmish between Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt (opposing public aid to private or parochial education in her column "My Day") and Cardinal Spellman (1949), the controversial *God and Man at Yale* (1951) by a young Catholic alumnus William F. Buckley, Jr., James B. Conant's resounding address on the social divisiveness of private education (April, 1952), the Zorach decision which vindicated dismissed-time religious education off public school premises (1952), and the rather cordial interfaith, frankly pluralistic deliberations at Pittsburgh of the fiftieth anniversary of the Religious Education Association (November, 1953).

Just as the Catholics are intent upon the extension of their separate school system, so in the wider and less obviously religious realm of communal, eleemosynary, and vocational organizations they are presently engaged in an extensive and nationally concerted effort either to take possession of the strategic centers of major organizations like the labor unions,⁵ or, failing this, to form separate Catholic societies, teams, clubs, drives, and unions. Community divisiveness or infiltration in this fifth area, that of our everyday life, seems less plausibly defensible than in the area of education where Catholic principles are more patently at stake.

The sixth sector of controversy is in the realm of moral theology and natural law from which Catholics derive explicit instruction on mixed marriage, birth control, certain medical practices in maternity cases, and divorce.

³ "Reds and Our Churches," *The American Mercury*, XXVII (1953), 3.

⁴ *Christian Science Monitor*, Nov. 10, 1953, p. 1.

⁵ The national convention of the C.I.O. in 1947 adopted a resolution favoring the "industry councils" plan first enunciated in *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1931.

Since, however, Protestants and other Americans are divided on all or several of these specific points, no explicitly confessional character has as yet entered into the tension, despite the intensity of feeling on all sides. This is partly because Protestant (and Jewish) thinking on these matters, while it is undergoing revision, is traditionally almost identical with that of Roman canon law.

Possibly a seventh line of development should be mentioned as of ultimate significance for Catholic-Protestant relations: the Boston Heresy Case. In the same month of 1949 when Blanshard's first book was reaching whatever bookstores were willing to risk Catholic disapproval or even boycott, a theological controversy within the archdiocese of Boston broke into the public press, astonishing Americans on the outside who had always supposed the Church to be monolithic in faith and morals. The president of Jesuit Boston College fired three young lay professors who had a few months earlier charged their Jesuit colleagues and superiors with heresy for teaching that salvation can be won by those outside the Roman Church. Archbishop Cushing supported the Jesuit president of the College, agreeing that the zeal of these professors (two of them recent converts) led to bigotry and intolerance. Therewith, Father Leonard Feeney, S.J., who since 1940 had been converting into a veritable school his St. Benedict's Center off Harvard Square, supported the stand of the three lay professors at Boston College. At this act of insubordination, Father Feeney was summarily suspended from his priestly functions, but he refused to submit despite the receipt of papal approbation of the Archbishop's action. Father Feeney, appealing to the Pope better informed, continued his school with a reduced enrollment, countenanced the publication of a book recounting the whole story,⁶ and proceeded to preach regularly in Boston Common. Catholic theologians have since gone on to explain to the faithful the acceptable meaning of the ancient formula.⁷

II. THE PRESENT MOOD OF THE TWO ANTAGONISTS

So much for a brief glance at the specific environing issues in which our discussion of Critical Pluralism must be located.

But before we go on to take up the interchange of the moderates of either side on the middle ground between the main body of the Catholic encampment and the main body of the Protestant forces it will be helpful to characterize the moods of the antagonists at midcentury. For in the

⁶ Clarke, Catherine, *The Loyolas and the Cabots*, Ravengate Press (Boston), 1950. The son of John Foster Dulles was among Father Feeney's converts.

⁷ Cf. John B. Sheerin, C.S.P., "Outside the Church No Salvation," *Catholic World*, CLXIX (1949), 161; and Henri de Lubac, S.J., called on to give his European prestige to the position taken, "Salvation through the Church," *Catholic World*, CLXX (1950), 362.

present Cultural Conflict in the United States the roles of Catholicism and Protestantism are, in the perspective of the centuries, sociologically and historically reversed.

Protestantism is here the *old* religion. Protestantism shaped the cultural contours of the Eastern seaboard, leaving monuments of its pervasive influence in the colonial churches dotting the landscape. Protestantism helped mold the basic institutions of the Republic and informed the new commonwealth with its spirit.

Catholicism is the *new*, one might almost say, revolutionary force, seemingly intent upon making certain constitutional changes as it adapts itself for a decisive role in the restructuring of American civilization. American Catholicism, having largely overcome the rivalries among its diverse ethnic groups and having improved its cultural position through the accession of zealous converts and the incorporation of numerous European exiled scholars in our over two hundred Catholic institutions of higher learning, is fully awakened to its tremendous responsibilities and opportunities in respect to Catholic strategy at home and abroad.

Protestantism, overwhelmed by the mounting evidences of the fresh religious vitalities stirring everywhere about it and long impatient with the limitations imposed upon its cultural effectiveness by superannuated internal divisions and duplications, is tempted, by imitation of the superior organizational activity of the Roman Church, to repossess some of the strategic positions in state and society. But Protestantism is at the same time restrained from undertaking a marshaled onslaught because of the residual rivalries and disparities within it, and especially because of the realization that cherished Protestant principles might be jeopardized in any massive fusion of the various denominations.

In this posture of hesitancy Protestantism either has tried to close its eyes to the Catholic challenge in order to preserve civil peace or has lapsed back into anti-Roman polemic in order, by reflex action as it were, to recover its identity. Anxious or uncertain about its proper role, Protestantism at one extreme has been betrayed into an alliance with anti-clerical and doctrinaire secularism. At the other extreme, many Protestants of the politically anxious middle classes, whose ministers frequently reflect the concerns of the business community, are increasingly disposed to see in the Roman Church, domestically and internationally, an invaluable ally. Regarded, then, as a whole, Protestant counsel and conduct in respect to Catholicism and culture are confused. Little by way of fundamental analysis and reconception has emerged to direct Protestantism in deploying its forces wisely in relation to Catholicism,

In contrast, American Catholicism, splendidly integrated, has definite goals and well articulated strategies. Certain American Catholic thinkers, indeed, are engaged in significant revisions of what constitutes the proper role of their Church within the free tradition of our democracy. The Church which in the Old World is strongest among the remnants of the aristocracy, among the intellectuals, and among the peasants—the Church of venerable antiquity—feels itself here to be the Church of the future, the Church which, having gathered under her wings the immigrant generations whose descendants constitute today the bulk of our city populations and the laboring classes now risen to political power, is destined to exercise an even more decisive influence in the decades to come.

With labor close to the Church (the clergy drawn largely from its ranks), and with management (traditionally Protestant) well disposed toward it, the ecclesiastical leadership seems sometimes to look upon "the remnants of Protestantism" as only incidental factors in what the Church regards as the major struggle, that with secularism and Communism. From the point of view of many Catholic leaders, Protestantism, divided in counsel, may fumblingly support the attack or unwittingly enter into alliance with secularism but, in either case, it will be largely ineffectual. This apparent self-confidence of much of American Catholicism enheartens and astonishes Catholic visitors who return to Europe filled with admiration at the zeal and resourcefulness of their American brethren in the faith, even when they occasionally advert, with sophisticated indulgence, to the excesses of American Catholic activism and modernity.

These foreign observers deplore the failure of transplanted Catholicism to communicate to American life a sense of history and its reluctance to implement a patent loyalty to the *Pontifex Maximus* by becoming the chief *bridge-builder* communion between the culture of the Old World and the New.⁸ Observing this same failing, an American Protestant has

⁸ Erik von K  hnelt-Leddihn, "America Revisited," *Catholic World*, CLXX (1950), 246. A recent, factual, and interpretive report by a visiting Catholic is that of Paul Bolkovac, S.J., "Die Stellung der Katholiken in USA," *Stimmen der Zeit*, CXLV (1949-1950), 34, 211, and "Urteile von Amerikanern   ber den Katholizismus," *ibid.*, 295. These reports are among the most valuable accounts of any of the European Catholic reporting on the American scene since the war, although the father does seem rather susceptible to the blandishments of Catholics in Hollywood. For a French account, Raymond Jouve, "Physionomie du Catholicisme am  ricain," *Es  de*, CLIX (1948), 179. He notes the comparatively slight amount of lay Catholic leadership in the United States. A sensitive account, but with an anti-Irish bias (about 43 per cent of the American episcopate is Irish) has been given by the British Catholic novelist Evelyn Waugh, "The American Epoch in the Catholic Church," *The Month*, N.S. II (1949), 293. This article was later adapted for *Life*.

Perhaps the most mature and discerning of the recent Catholic characterizations of the American Church is that of the American Jesuit Walter Ong before a French audience, "American Catholicism and America," *Thought*, XXVII (1952/3), 521. Two other valuable characterizations of contemporary American Catholicism are those by Reinhold Niebuhr, "A Protestant Looks at Catholics," *Commonweal*, LVIII (1953), 117 and by Will Herberg, *ibid.*, 174. A whole series of helpful articles follows by Catholics, lay and clerical.

remarked that the trouble with American Catholics is that they are *too* patriotic.

Long under the supervision of the *Congregatio de propaganda fide*, the Catholic Church in the United States was belatedly granted in 1908 the same degree of autonomy enjoyed in Europe. Possibly, among the reasons for delayed independence were uncertainty as to the outcome of the maintenance of sacerdotal authority over against lay financial control (trusteeism) and indecision as to the proper role of the foreign-language, national groupings (Cahensleyism). It was in this difficult legal and ethnic situation that the English-speaking but traditionally anti-English, intensely ultramontane, nationalist Irish clergy had been providentially assigned a strategic role in the development of the American Church. When finally accorded the ecclesiastical status commensurate with its size and growing wealth, the American hierarchy readily accepted canonical and civil arrangements whereby the bishops enjoyed more control over the parochial clergy, the cathedral clergy, and the laity than is usual in Europe. At the same time, American bishops have become more closely linked to Rome and responsive to its instructions than the clergy of older Catholic lands with ancient privileges accruing from national struggle and venerable endowments.⁹

The tactical mobility of the American hierarchy is, then, in part a consequence of its being unencumbered by venerable usages and diocesan rivalries and of being free of state interference and restriction. So well has the Church flourished in a religiously free commonwealth with parochial rather than political support that many of its bishops have gone out of their way to praise the American way, and Archbishop John T. McNicholas, speaking in 1948 for the entire American episcopate, declared: "We deny absolutely and without qualification that the Catholic Bishops of the United States are seeking a union of Church and State by any endeavors whatsoever either proximately or *remotely*." It is clear from this and similar asseverations that the American experience of civil and religious liberty has penetrated to the interior of the Church and may well bring about a comprehensive, authoritative restatement of the traditional Catholic thesis on the proper relationship between Church and State.

This ongoing "Americanization," in a sense different from the *Americanismo* condemned by Leo XIII in 1899, is to be explained in part

⁹ Well described by a former Catholic priest, Prof. George La Piana in "A Totalitarian Church in a Democratic State: The American Experiment," *Shane Quarterly Review*, X (1949), 55.

For the constitution of the present-day Church with special reference to the American scene, see Elizabeth M. Lynskey, *The Government of the Catholic Church*, P. J. Kennedy & Son, 1952.

as a consequence of the unexpectedly substantial results of purely voluntarist support of the parishes and programs of the Church, the conformist urge in immigrant psychology, the sense of solidarity between the laity and the clergy as they rise together in American society, the cultural osmosis by which the environing ethos of a free Protestant-secular democracy penetrates and diffuses the immigrant-Catholic religio-social concentrations, and finally the intellectual maturation of the Church on all levels.

Nevertheless, in taking on distinctively American features, the Church remains, at the deepest level of its life and action, ambivalent in its feeling towards American society as a whole. In its Americanization two moods alternate: caution and confidence.

The cautious or even hostile mood is connected with the survivals of a minority complex in American Catholicism which will probably long bear the traumatic effects incurred during its rebirth in an alien environment and amidst the often bigoted and at times cruel resistance of a native, sectarian Protestantism.

As for the confident mood it would appear that in a socio-psychological sense American Catholics have taken over something of the expansive, optimistic spirit of the main body of Protestantism of an earlier period.

In this expansive, missionary mood the Church is faced with a particularly exacting task of continuous discrimination. Ordinarily, missionary Catholicism on fully pagan soil can, as prudence and theology prescribe, either reject or adapt elements of the old religion and culture. Or again, when recovering lost ground in traditionally Christian lands, even those which are Protestant or secularized, Catholicism in a converting mood can point to the monuments of Christian antiquity and evoke the memory of a former unity in Christ and in culture. But in the United States the Roman Church must for the first time in its millennial experience try to interpret its role in a largely secularized, post-Protestant society which has few memories and no monuments from a *Catholic Age*.¹⁰ The *new* religion in the land, the Catholic Church, is on the one hand tempted, on the analogy of its conduct in missionary territory, to adapt and assimilate what it finds useful or valid in the old—in this case Puritan ethos and institutions—and on the other hand it is reminded of its venerable duties and prerogatives when coping with heretics and schismatics.

It is clear, then, that there are both wholesome and unwholesome effects for the civil community and for the Christian mission as a whole

¹⁰ An extraordinary amount of Catholic scholarship devoted to "pre-Columbian" bishops and "medieval America" (Greenland) is symptomatic of a felt want.

in the present ambivalence of the Roman Church in its American environment.

More important still is the recognition that American Catholicism, far from being monolithic, is in fact molten, susceptible of taking any one of a variety of possible shapes depending upon the outcome of the conflicting pressures, shocks, and strains of the present upheaval and realignment of forces in American society.

III. POLITICAL CONFSSIONALISM, IDEALISTIC SECULARISM, CRITICAL PLURALISM

In order to place the American Cultural Conflict in its proper setting, it will be useful to recognize that not merely the Catholics but all three of the major religious traditions in the United States, Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant, display, though with unequal distribution, three distinguishable attitudes in coping with the religio-cultural and constitutional problem which we face in our heterogeneous society.

These three major positions I have already designated as: Political Confessionism, Critical Pluralism, and Idealistic Secularism. We have now reached the point where they can be more fully defined against the historical and more recent controversial background. Common to all three is a concern for the whole of the state and for society at large—in contrast to a fourth position which is herewith introduced to make clearer the political comprehensiveness of the other three, namely, Communal Separatism.

For this fourth position, *Communal Separatism*, on principle, limits the social outreach of religious convictions to the believing community. It refrains from drawing any political inferences of the faith for society at large. I have placed it on the present political spectrum at the extreme right. Determinative here is indifference to, ignorance of, or outright repudiation of Christian politics in a one-sided emphasis on the "spiritual" and on purely personal piety. Be it noted, however, that the ancestors of some of the present-day "Protestant" representatives of Communal Separatism are properly said to have constituted in the sixteenth century the "left wing of the Reformation" and in the English seventeenth century "the parties of the left," because in those formative periods of sectarian dissent, separatism was strategic rather than programmatic. But most of these earlier sects by now either have settled down as religio-cultural enclaves unconcerned with political society as a whole (like the Amish Mennonites) or have "matured" as main-line denominations more or less alert to the contemporary political problems. Under the general heading, Communal Separatism, therefore, are gathered mostly the newer

American fissiparous sects and cults which have sprung up in the interstices of our denominational tangle.

Political Confessionalism, representing almost the opposite extreme in its concern to dominate the whole of society, describes that conventional or conservative view which is to be found in each of the three great religious traditions.

For Judaism, Political Confessionalism is, of course, a live option only in the new state of Israel wherein the Orthodox still hope for the establishment of a theocracy. (In the New World, Orthodox Judaism is satisfied, as throughout the ages, with Communal Separatism.)

For Protestantism, Political Confessionalism goes by several names. In the sixteenth century it was expressed in the formula *cuius regio, eius religio*, and in England by the royal headship of the Church. In the United States, this same impulse is exemplified as Christian Nationalism, characterized by repeated efforts during our national history to make ours expressly a Christian or even a Protestant nation with the Deity acknowledged in a Constitutional Amendment. In the middle years of the Republic, this effort had a clear anti-Catholic bias as, for example, in the Know-Nothing Movement. In more recent years, the pro-capitalist, proto-fascist, sometimes anti-Semitic motifs are characteristic. Though Political Confessionalism has venerable and respected antecedents in classical Protestantism, it is significant that the very churches which in Europe flourished under this system, like the Lutheran, Episcopal, and Presbyterian, have in the United States for the most part not only adjusted to, but frankly rejoiced in, the freedom of the community of faith from civil society. Thus, despite the European antecedents of these churchly denominations and because of the denominational "maturation" of many of the dissenter sects of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries like the Baptists, most of the leadership, at least, of the main-line American Protestant groups, expressly dissociates itself from Political Confessionalism (and Communal Separatism).

For Catholicism, in contrast, Political Confessionalism represents the ideal of the main body of the Church, whose theorists have been recently called the "Static Expositors"¹¹ in reference to their routinized inability to reconceive the application of canon law in fresh terms pertinent to the American experience and situation. Religio-political interpreters like Fathers John A. Ryan and Francis Boland¹² exemplify this traditional view of the manuals, restating with very little grace the Catholic thesis

¹¹ I have taken over this term and its correlative "Dynamic Expositors" from Gustave Weigel, "The Church and the Democratic State," *Thoughts*, XXVII (1952/53), 165.

¹² *Catholic Principals of Politics*, rev. ed., The Macmillan Company, 1940. For more recent defenders see p. 177 of the present article, note 24, no. 7.

which supposedly finds its most nearly perfect embodiment in the Spanish or Portuguese establishments. (As with Orthodox Judaism and Sectarian Protestantism, so even with Catholicism there are those to the extreme right who are satisfied with Communal Separatism and who have recently been called "Reactionaries"¹³ and "Separatists."¹⁴ These Catholics have not in principle abandoned, of course, the great tradition of the Church in respect to her responsibility for society at large, but by temperament and ethnic culture they are effectually the Catholic counterparts of the "Protestant" Sectarians and the Jewish Orthodox in their withdrawal from the main preoccupations of contemporary American society.)

Turning from the religio-political manifestations in each of the three faiths at the right (Political Confessionalism) and at the extreme right (Communal Separatism) and passing over, for the moment, the middle positions, let us examine briefly the religio-political left.

For this position we have chosen the designation *Idealistic Secularism*. This is not an entirely happy characterization, but it has the merit of suggesting more positive qualities than the bare term "secularism" ordinarily conveys to churchmen. Alternate designations might have been Religious Americanism or a coined phrase "Religious Democratism," the distinctly American phenomenon of converting democracy itself into a religion. Secularism may be *theistic* or *humanistic*. Its determinative feature is a disposition to subordinate confessional differences in the over-arching unity of "the common faith," "the faith of democracy."¹⁵ In its inchoate stage, it is idealistic, endeavoring to articulate a common-denominator faith as the ideological support of democracy against "godless" Communism. But in its more advanced and explicit forms it smacks of Rousseau's Civil Religion which, disowning any distinctive vantage point for social criticism (revelation), easily becomes chauvinistic.¹⁶

The espousal of Idealistic Secularism has been quite common in Liberal Judaism, especially during the period before the establishment of the State of Israel and the concurrent recovery of certain traditional values among the Temple congregations.

For cultural Protestantism Idealistic Secularism is much more widespread than even the exponents themselves are prepared to recognize. In

¹³ Erik von K  hnelt-Leddihn, "The Catholic Reactionary," *The Commonweal*, LVIII (1953), 267. Here an Austrian lay Catholic generalizes primarily with the European representatives of the position in mind.

¹⁴ John J. Kane, "Catholic Separatism," *The Commonweal*, LVIII (1953), 293. Here a Notre Dame sociologist deplors the cultural isolation of the "Catholic ghetto." "The indicated stratagem is a sally."

¹⁵ Cf. John Dewey, *A Common Faith*, Yale University Press, 1934; A. Powell Davies, *America's Real Religion*, Beacon Press, 1951; Conrad Moehlman, *The Wall of Separation Between Church and State*, Beacon Press, 1951; H. M. Kallen, "Democracy's True Religion Secularism," *The Saturday Review of Literature*, XXXIV (1951), 6.

¹⁶ Cf. Salo Baron, *Modern Religion and Nationalism*, Harper & Brothers, 1947.

its more extreme and articulate form it is being called by Catholics "Blanshardism," in reference to Paul Blanshard whose writings have imported a new intensity into the debates going on between Catholics and Protestants at midcentury.¹⁷

In Roman Catholicism, the extreme position of Idealistic Secularism would be impossible for any disciplined member of the clergy, at least in the United States, but amongst the laity, subject to the diverse influences of a free society, the mood is approached, for example, in Thomas Sugrue.¹⁸ His European counterpart is the "Assimilationist,"¹⁹ a designation which has been recently taken over from its former use in respect to Judaism.

Now between the various forms of Idealistic Secularism on the left and on the right Political Confessionalism, lies the emerging middle ground represented by *Critical Pluralism*. *Critical Pluralism* is more than a *sociological* description of American cultural heterogeneity. It is more than a *political* designation for the whole American system of constitutional federalism with its subsidiary complex of overlapping jurisdictions and authorities, both public and semi-private, which together help assure the measure of civic liberty we enjoy as a commonwealth. *Critical Pluralism* is, in fact, a quasi-*theological* formulation of the religio-political structure of a free society in which the individual and the churches—none of the latter enjoying a state-sanctioned monopoly—are most likely to be assured freedom and motivation to discharge the prophetic function of criticism for the good of society as a whole.

It is near to this middle position, thus defined, that the main body of culturally alert, prophetic Judaism is to be located. This position is understandably congenial to the representatives of a faith which is largely a matter of birth and inherited culture. It is a natural rallying point for Jews who, as a religious and cultural minority, desire to perpetuate the values of the ancient community of the covenant and at the same time to insist upon the relevance of this tradition for the ethical and political life of the American commonwealth as a whole. But within American Judaism, possibly because of the current preoccupation with a more compelling religio-political concern (the State of Israel), very little by way of a fresh

¹⁷ *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, 1949; *Communism, Democracy, and Catholic Power*, 1951; and *The Irish and Catholic Power: An American Interpretation*, 1953. Beacon Press, Boston.

¹⁸ Sugrue expressed his dissatisfaction with a "booming, aggressive, materialistic, and socially ambitious" Catholicism in two articles in Daniel Poling's *Christian Herald*, 1952. Therein he voiced the hope that the three faiths could get together on the common ground of charity. After national comment in *Time*, the series was edited as a book, *A Catholic Speaks His Mind on America's Religious Conflict*, Harper & Brothers, 1952.

¹⁹ Cf. Erik von K  hnelt-Leddihn, "The Catholic Assimilationist," *The Commonwealth*, LVIII (1953), 483. In contrasting this tendency with "Reaction," the author remarks "... Assimilation is a strategic mistake on a theological basis."

rethinking of the position of Critical Pluralism in American terms has attracted general attention.

The same is true within American Protestantism. Protestants have been able until quite recently to take for granted that the United States is at least culturally a Protestant country. The various Protestant sects and churches which once struggled with each other for the conversion of America have pretty much settled down as "churchly" denominations, accepting American cultural and religious pluralism as a way of life. But this organizational accommodation has not been accompanied by any major theological adjustment or reconception of the place of the State within the terms of any of the major non-Roman traditions, whether Anglican, Reformed, Lutheran, Sectarian, or Orthodox. And as to religious pluralism, wherever it is not simply accepted as a natural consequence of America's disparate origins, it is commonly under criticism as divisive, to be corrected by ecumenical interchange and federation. Thus, although American Protestants have indeed been brought to think through more deeply than ever before the nature and function of the Church in both sociological and theological terms, we have yet to work out a theologically undergirded political theory with special reference to constitutional law.²⁰

Thus it has been left to the Roman Catholics, in adapting themselves to our open American society with its Protestant backgrounds, to feel under the compulsion to think through the Old World or conventional concept of Political Confessionalism, to re-examine American constitutional history, and thus to restate the Catholic thesis in fresh terms. Though the main body of American Catholicism is located at the right of the religio-political spectrum (Political Confessionalism), a sufficiently numerous and articulate group have moved into the middle position which we have denominated Critical Pluralism to demand the attention of those Protestants who are unwilling as yet to engage in the open war that has broken out between the extremists of the opposing camps in the present Cultural Conflict.

The middle position within Catholicism might be called Liberal, but this designation is as much a taunting epithet as an honorable badge among Catholics,²¹ since at its worst in Catholic eyes it may suggest the tendency of the Assimilationist. And since even at its best it refers pri-

²⁰ Anson Phelps Stokes' three-volume *Church and State*, Harper & Brothers, 1950, is an invaluable quarry of historical materials but not a monument of Protestant political theory.

²¹ Cf. William P. Clancy, "The 'Liberal Catholic,'" *The Commonweal*, LV (1951/2), 335. He points out that "Those whose theology he [the Liberal] shares frequently distrust him because of his politics; and those with whom he feels at home politically may doubt him because of this theology." Clancy spells out the goals of Liberal Catholicism as political liberty, social and economic equality, material progress, and "a pluralistic society."

marily to an attitude of civil friendliness toward non-Catholics and of concern for progressive legislation for the welfare of all classes in the mood of the Roosevelt era, it is not a sufficiently accurate designation for the representatives of the new Critical Pluralism. The exponents themselves help us very little with nomenclature, for they are understandably reluctant to identify their position as something new. If they were entirely free, they might designate it "Democratic Gelasianism," but since a good deal of papal instruction has to be taken into consideration after the pontificate of Gelasius I (492-496), the only group label which has come forward is that of "Dynamic Expositors."²²

IV. CATHOLIC APPROACHES TO CRITICAL PLURALISM

It is one of the main purposes of the present survey of the relations between American Catholics and Protestants at midcentury to draw Protestant attention to the emerging middle ground where both Catholic and Protestant publicists might profitably meet to interrelate and mutually correct or confirm their several convictions as to what would constitute a viable theory of Christian democracy. Here, constructively minded Catholics and Protestants alike could take account both of the social threat of religio-cultural divisiveness (Communal Separatism as the *transitional* expedient of programmatic Catholic Political Confessionalism) and the political threat of the conversion of democracy itself into a civil religion (Idealistic Secularism).

Thus far there has been almost no Protestant discussion²³ of the new development, to say nothing of response, perhaps because the Dynamic Expositors themselves seem to be directing their thought to jurists and academicians rather than to Protestants as such. Under heavy assault from the "Static Expositors" within their own Communion, the new position being built up, when it is heeded at all by Protestant observers, is regarded as merely a variant position within the Catholic Church without general significance for the construction of a Christian theory of the democratic State in fresh American terms.

We turn now to the chief exponent of Catholic Critical Pluralism, the leader of the Dynamic Expositors, Father John Courtney Murray, S.J., Professor at Woodstock, Maryland; he was called as visiting professor of medieval philosophy at Yale, 1951/2. Father Murray's daring

²² Cf. above, note 11.

²³ F. Ernest Johnson of the National Council of the Churches stands out among Protestants in having followed the new Catholic development with mounting admiration. Cf. the excellent recent summary, "Church and State in Roman Catholic Theory," *Information Service*, XXXII (1953), No. 35.

reconception of the Catholic thesis, partly under inspiration from abroad, has been for the most part veiled from the general public in the mists which halo all achievements appearing exclusively in learned theological journals.²⁴

Murray regards as allies in his radical reconstruction the Belgian Jacques Leclercq,²⁵ the French Jesuit Joseph Lecler,²⁶ the Austrian layman, Erik von Kühnelt-Leddihn,²⁷ and the German Jesuit Max Pribilla.²⁸ Murray perhaps goes beyond these in completely repudiating as properly normative for Catholics the late medieval national church and the seventeenth-century confessional state. He is spirited in his denunciation of the now infamous article so often cited by American Protestants, that by F. Cavalli, which glories in the suppression *in principle* of Protestantism in Spain²⁹ where the Catholic thesis is allegedly operative in all its Iberian grandeur.³⁰ He reasons that the Catholic thesis dare not be

²⁴ His major contributions to political theology are as follows (to be cited hereafter by the herewith assigned numbers):

1. "Freedom of Religion: I. The Ethical Problem," with *Theological Studies*, VI (1945), 229.
2. "Paul Blanchard and the New Nativism," *The Month*, CXCI (1951), 214.
3. "Governmental Repression of Heresies," *Proceedings*, The Catholic Theological Society of America, Third Annual Meeting (1948), 26.
4. "St. Robert Bellarmine on the Indirect Power," *Theological Studies*, IX (1948), 491.
5. "Contemporary Orientations of Catholic Thought on Church and State in the Light of History," *Theological Studies*, X (1949), 177, reprinted in *Cross Currents*, II (1951), 15.
6. "On Religious Freedom," *Theological Studies*, X (1949), 409. In his observations on allied Catholic thinkers, Murray cites and situates his own previous studies.
7. "The Problem of the Religion of the State," *American Ecclesiastical Review*, CXXIV (1951), 327. Here he undertakes to substantiate his claim that the doctrine of "the Religion of the State" is based on an outmoded historical application of the abiding "thesis" of the Church against Father George W. Shea's canonically grounded defense of the conventional Catholic theory in "Catholic Doctrine and 'The Religion of the State,'" *ibid.*, CXXIII (1950), 161. Father Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R. of the Catholic University of America continues the conventional Catholic critique in "The Theory of the 'Lay State,'" *ibid.*, CXXV (1951), 161. This whole controversy, between the Static and the Dynamic Expositors, is admirably summarized by Victor R. Yanitelli, S.J., "A Church-State Controversy," *Thought*, XXVI (1951/2), 443.
8. "The Church and Totalitarian Democracy," *Theological Studies*, XIII (1952), 525.

9 a, b, c. Three major studies devoted exclusively to the Leonine corpus, *ibid.*, XIV (1953), I, 145; 551.

The whole range of Murray's thought up through item 7 has been brought together systematically by Yanitelli in "A Church State Anthology," *Thought*, XXVII (1952/3), 6-42. Murray's basic idea was given more popular circulation in the refutation of Blanchard by Frederick E. Flynn, "Church, State, and the Person: The Two Loyalties Are Rooted in One and the Same Human Being," *The Commonwealth*, LIV (1951), 447.

²⁵ *État chrétien et liberté de l'Église*, *Vis intellectuelle*, 1949, 99.

²⁶ Very similar to Leclercq is the thought of the French Jesuit Joseph Lecler, whose popular work (1946) has been translated into English as *The Two Sovereignities: A Study of the Relation Between Church and State*, Philosophical Library, 1952. Lecler is willing to accord high recognition to the sects of the sixteenth century and the English separatists of the seventeenth who, while wanting in an institutional sense, did yeoman service in clarifying for the Church its own role in the world. "The difficulties of the Church's life . . . are of constant assistance in enabling her to purify the methods of her apostolate. Indeed, the co-existence of Church and State on earth provides as it were a providential corrective of the former."

²⁷ "Katholische Toleranz?," *Wort und Wahrheit*, IV (1949), 342.

²⁸ "Dogmatische Intoleranz und bürgerliche Toleranz," *Stimmen der Zeit*, CXLIV (1949), 27.

²⁹ "La condizione dei Protestanti in Spagna," *Civiltà Cattolica*, XCIX (1948), 29.

³⁰ In attacking the Spanish Catholic work *Liberalismo es pecado*, as though liberalism were a matter not for conference but for the confessional, one can almost overhear this intrepid follower of Loyola exclaim: "Hispanidad es pecado!" ("The Spanish Way is sin!") (7:335, n. 9).

identified with any given historical situation. He therefore deplores the manner in which the Church in the period of royal absolutism and of the reactionary restorations in the nineteenth century at first *tolerated* a historically seemingly necessary accommodation of the abiding thesis (dyarchy) to national absolutism, then *accepted* it, and today in some places (Franco's Spain, for example) blatantly *defends* it. Father Murray is the chief spokesman in America for the view that the proper concern of the Church in all centuries, her abiding thesis, is vigilance in protecting the freedom of the Church against the monistic tendency of all states, pagan or *Catholic* or democratic.

Going back to Pope Gelasius by way of Leo XIII and John of Paris, whom he favors against the papal extremists (5:195-211), Father Murray is concerned to restate the Gelasian dyarchy in democratic terms. Significantly, he does not try to establish any important contacts with earlier American Catholic pronouncements—to avoid perhaps any suggestion of the condemned *Americanismo*, confining his major research to the classical sources. At the same time he is eloquent in his claim that the American principle of benevolent separation (the First Amendment) whereby the State disclaims competence in the field of religion and “does not pretend to be The Whole” (5:188) is a boon that official theory and pronouncement even in America⁸¹ has all too tardily recognized. In its preoccupation with resisting the pretensions of the monistic state of nineteenth-century Continental Liberalism, the Papacy, according to Murray, has failed until recently to understand the true significance of Anglo-American liberalism: “. . . the din raised by the conflict with Continental Liberalism was too great to permit the voice of America (ironically, a Deist and Protestant voice giving a Catholic answer) to be heard in European canon-law classrooms . . . unaware that there is any difference between Jacobin democracy and Anglo-American democracy (7:366, n. 10).” For at least two reasons

. . . it is the present task of Catholics to work toward the purification of the liberal tradition (*which is their own real tradition*) and of the democratic form of state in which it finds expression, by restoring both the idea and the institutions of democracy to their proper Christian foundations. First, this form of state is presently man's best, and possibly last, hope of human freedom. Secondly, this form of state presently offers to the Church as a spiritual power as good a hope of freedom as she has ever had . . . (7:335f.)

⁸¹ Thus Father Murray expressly repudiates Fathers Ryan and Boland, who though liberal on social matters, argued for programmatic Political Confessionalism and vigorously restated the conventional view of the canonical manuals that, on becoming a majority, Catholics in America would proceed to make good their plenary claim to constitute the religion of the State.

Father Murray deplores the fact that so many Catholics in the course of defending the Church have unwittingly identified some historic application of the abiding thesis with the thesis itself (dyarchy), seemingly impervious to the *theoretical* implications of the widely acknowledged fact that "The Church in the United States, even in the absence of public legal status, enjoys a freedom that she never had under their Most Catholic or Most Christian Majesties . . . (7:329, n. 3)."

A consequence of the entanglement of catholicity in historical accommodations rendered obsolete is that "in the popular mind the Church, which is the home of freedom and the last bulwark of the rights of man, has become identified not with freedom but with governmental coercion (4:329, n. 3)." Convinced that the central problem of theology today is not "faith and reason" but "faith and history" (6:422), and that the chief temporal role of the Church in our generation is that of defender of civil freedoms, Father Murray urges his fellow-Catholics to rethink the relationship of the Church to heresy (6:421f.) and in this connection to consider the impropriety of demanding wherever a Catholic majority prevails that the State acknowledge Catholicism as the religion of the State. He himself maintains that for social, psychological, ethical, and ultimately ecclesiological reasons the State even of an overwhelmingly Catholic people should not coerce its citizenry religiously.

With mounting confidence in the cogency of his cumulative research, Murray argues that "the Church in the U. S. can be guided only in terms of pure principles, not in terms of past applications of principle, made in alien contexts" (9b:178). Murray labors with consuming intensity to extract this pure principle embedded in the Leonine *corpus*. For a crucial issue in the extended debate with the Static Expositors is over the Leonine instruction concerning the religion of the State. Murray contends that in our Federal Republic where there has never been a union of Church and State and where separation is amicable and mutually respectful, in our commonwealth where the "Catholic minority is not the predominantly peasant and proletarian Catholic population of the old Catholic nation" (9b:185), in our constitutional democracy, again, where political sovereignty is particularized in each citizen—it is no longer possible to make use of that portion of the Leonine instruction directed to older states in which separationism had become the burning issue between the older Political Confessionalism of the Catholic reactionaries and that "totalitarian," "omnicompetent," "laicist," "Jacobin" democracy which we have been here calling Idealistic Secularism. A good deal of Leo's specific

counsel, being historically conditioned, may be respectfully put to one side as inapplicable in the American situation.

But the theoretical portion of Leo's instruction, the pure principle, is all the more precious for Americans because of his clarification of "the relation between two societies, distinct in origin, purpose, and means for achieving purposes." Indeed, his "statement is the clearest and most formal one ever made by any Pope on the fact that there are two societies and not merely two powers" (9b:200f.). And the practical consequence of this epochal differentiation is, according to Murray, that in our democracy every believer, as both a Christian and a citizen (*civis idem et christianus*), is a member of two societies and that within him, lay or clerical, and through him is to be achieved whatever harmony and "orderly co-operation" are possible not only between the two powers represented by the hierarchy and government, but also between two societies: the community of faith and the commonwealth.

The Church, of course, will ever struggle to make good her plenary claims upon the faithful citizen, but in the American situation (6:409ff. and 7:338) she will understand religious freedom as both personal and corporate and, un beholden to the State however "Catholic" the population, she will acknowledge that as Catholic and millennial she should no longer remain in the ridiculous posture of squinting backwards to a particular time-bound relationship as the *only* full and valid application of her ageless thesis. She will recognize that faith must be personal and without public coercion, that though "the historical demand for personal freedom was part of a great struggle against the Church and Christian truth; . . . its erroneous origins do not vitiate it *in se* as a human aspiration (6:411)." Indeed Murray agrees with Leclercq that in a homogeneous Catholic population the task of the State might very well be "to protect dissident minorities rather than the common opinion which spontaneously reacts against, and despises, dissidence" (6:412), pointing to the serious dangers to the true Church in nominal conformity. The only harmony worth achieving in Father Murray's theory is the concordat, as it were, in the heart of the individual, *civis idem et christianus*.⁸²

The *sacerdotium* which once dealt directly with the *imperium* or the *regnum* now in a free society operates most appropriately on the individual conscience, which assents in faith to the instruction of the clergy.

⁸² Cf. 5:221: The finality of this harmony is not a social unity but a personal unity—the integrity of the human personality. It is only by preservation of this integrity that man is truly "free," empowered to be in fullness what he *is*—citizen and Christian. This freedom is a positive empowerment—the full faculty of obeying the law which he knows to have the primacy (the law of Christ as mediated by the Church), under due obedience to the other law to which he is also subject, the human law of the state. Unless these two obediences are in harmony, there is no freedom.

But the Christian is also a citizen, with functions undertaken in common with non-Catholics. Murray thus recognizes a considerable neutral area of common aspiration and co-operation in the extension of "personal and associational liberty, political equality, civic friendship, social justice and cultural advancement" (7:336).

Besides Father Murray we cannot fail to make mention, at least, of two or three other Catholic representatives of the new Critical Pluralism.

William F. Lynch, S.J., editor of Fordham University's quarterly *Thought*, in clarifying the position of the Church over against Blanshardian democracy,³³ urges "that Charity is her final doctrine and that she [ideally he means] can never tolerate a fighting for doctrine that omits the greatest of her doctrines." Thereupon, in defense of pluralism Lynch stresses that American theorists of democratic society and culture are on the verge of a momentous decision as to whether "they are to seek the future unity of the nation along the lines of an existential [critical] pluralism or along those of a least denominator culture [idealistic secularism]." He acknowledges that "It is not easy to live in many worlds and the neurotic danger, the division of soul and ideals, will always threaten to be severe. But how else will one world ever come to birth unless we consent to live in many?"

It is only half of the truth [he continues movingly] to say that we live in a fragmented and shattered world; the other half is that, in the plan and providence of God, the life of man and society has become articulated in a much more complicated way [than in the unitedly sacral world of the Middle Ages]; there are many more autonomies today—and these can only become one if the Christian lives them all in his own soul. They will find unity nowhere else.

Charles Donahue, professor of English at Fordham, takes up the significance of pluralism for American education.³⁴ He is at the outset willing to acknowledge the frequently divisive effects of separatist education but goes on to point out the still greater danger implicit in what we have called Idealistic Secularism, and what he calls political monism. Going back to American political thought at the founding of the Republic, he is at pains to restore to its original significance the idea of a *religiously uncommitted* state. He seems pleased to record the fact that despite the tremendous temptation which beset Protestant Americans in the crucial period of the great immigration, "the Protestant majority abided by our [implicit] constitutional pluralism and permitted it to come into complete

³³ *Thought*, XXVI (1951/2), 581.

³⁴ "Freedom and Education: The Pluralist Background," *ibid.*, XXVI (1952/3), 542.

act." "The test of the limited state," he says, "is in its power to hold together in civil peace diverse and potentially antagonistic moral forces [and] to permit free development of these forces . . . in the common interest." He rightly points up the contribution of Judaism in assuring the probable success of the American democratic pluralistic pattern despite the present threats, for Jews are "expert in pluralist living" and best qualified perhaps of the three major religious groupings "to co-operate in the advance from tolerance to pluralism." In a pluralistic nation, Judaism "has an opportunity for full and free development of its impressive spiritual and cultural resources as a partner in the common task of forming the character of American citizens."

The principal threat to the religious pluralism of our religiously uncommitted constitutional Republic, Donahue finds in the "antipluralist delusion" which refuses "to believe that our uncommitted state is really uncommitted" and, in a "groping for some pattern of conviction which would be more 'American,'" is actually blinded "to the real sources of the moral dynamism behind our conduct of secular affairs." Donahue's convictions may be best recorded in the following warning: "If the antipluralist delusion were embodied in our institutions, the effect would be reactionary and we would be led back from pluralism to the religiously committed state or, more likely, to a secularized variant of the committed state." This warning in defense of Critical Pluralism is far removed from the Political Confessionalism usually pilloried by Protestant and secular critics of Catholics in politics.

The whole of this historical and political argument for the constitutional democracy of a limited state is so eloquent that we must acknowledge that in the Catholic repossession of the original concepts of the Founding Fathers the cause of American constitutional democracy has been greatly strengthened. Indeed one of the permanent deposits of the present controversy between Catholics and other Americans will have been the production of a substantial amount of research in American constitutional history and the communication of a sense of American history to a rather large range of participants in and observers of the ongoing debate.

Into this development are to be fitted also the partly historical, partly publicistic works by Fathers Wilfrid Parsons, Robert C. Hartnett, George H. Dunne,³⁵ Joseph N. Moody,³⁶ and by the doughty upholder

³⁵ *Religion and American Democracy*, American Press, 1949. This was a reply to Blanshard's first book, appearing at first serially in the Jesuit weekly *America*, June 4 to July 30.

³⁶ Cf. his "American Catholic Influences in Europe," *Historical Records and Studies*, XXXVIII (1950), 5. Moody documents his conviction that "The debt owed by the Church universal to the pioneers of American Catholicism [the 'successful entente with political democracy'] is not inconsiderable."

of civil liberties, James M. O'Neill, professor of speech at Brooklyn College.

Father Parsons in *The First Amendment*, 1949, challenged the validity of the historical documentation and argumentation in the McCollum decision, contending that the Amendment does not rule out *equal* Federal support of all denominations and surely cannot be construed (by way of the Fourteenth Amendment) to bind the states more rigorously than the Federal government—which still maintains, for example, a kind of impartial, multiple establishment of the principal denominations repressed inserted through the efforts of Catholic Daniel Carroll.

Professor O'Neill and his immediate associates are not, so far as this argumentation which went into the defense of the religious education program declared unconstitutional by the McCollum decision, embodied his research in *Religion and Education under the Constitution* (Harper & Brothers, 1949). Following out the leads of Father Parsons, he documented his conviction that multiple establishment is still a live option within the original intention of the First Amendment.⁸⁷ Admittedly the present state constitutions would have to be changed. Professor O'Neill passes rather lightly over the implications of the Fourteenth Amendment. More recently in reply to Blanshard and E. Freeman Butts, O'Neill has written *Catholicism and American Freedom* (Harper & Brothers, 1952). Herein, among many other things, he draws attention to the fact that the all-important addendum in the wording of the Tenth Amendment reserving the unspecified powers to the constituent states "*or to the people*" was inserted through the efforts of Catholic Daniel Carroll.

Professor O'Neill and his immediate associates are not, so far as this observer can determine, in exactly the same line of development as the Dynamic Expositors of Critical Pluralism, although the two developments are undoubtedly allied. The clerical Dynamic Expositors seem at times almost studiously to avoid references to the specific contemporary American situation and passing issues, content with their three basic concepts drawn from American democratic theory and experience: the religiously uncommitted state, the political sovereignty of the individual, and cultural or

⁸⁷ To the claim that a "multiple establishment" was foreseen or expressly countenanced by the Founding Fathers, R. Freeman Butts replied in *The American Tradition in Religion and Education*, Beacon Press, 1950, and more massively Leo Pfeffer, *Church and State*, 1953.

⁸⁸ The distinguished Protestant jurist-historian Edward S. Corwin agreed with the O'Neill thesis in "The Supreme Court as National School Board," *Thought*, XXIII (1948), 665.

On some of the specific issues the present writer has expressed himself along with Bishop Oxnham, vs. Prof. O'Neill and Dr. Vincent A. McGrossen in *Public Aid to Parochial Education: A Discussion . . . Presented by the Harvard Law School Forum*, 1951, and earlier in "The Church, the Democratic State, and the Crisis in Religious Education," *Harvard Divinity School Bulletin*, XLVI (1949), 35.

existential pluralism. The rest of their theory unfolds for the most part in papal and European terms. O'Neill, forensic publicist, has, in contrast, been working out an interfaith *modus vivendi* in almost exclusively American, constitutional terms. Indeed when his antagonists draw conclusions from Catholic practice and papal utterance in the Old World or infer theoretical implications for the American future from his own conceptions, Professor O'Neill is perhaps a little too facile with his favorite weapon of defense, the exclamatory "Nonsense!"

V. A PROTESTANT APPROACH TO CRITICAL PLURALISM

The Protestant counterpart of Professor O'Neill is not Paul Blanshard, whom he is ostensibly fighting, but rather James Nichols, professor of church history at the University of Chicago, whose *Democracy and the Churches* (Westminster Press, 1951),³⁹ has not received anything of the attention of either O'Neill's or Blanshard's works. The churchly Protestant and democratic citizen who is not swayed by Blanshard's exposition may put down Nichols' book, despairing of any other role for the non-Roman denominations in their relations with Rome than to serve as expendable buffer states in the vast struggle going on between two rival authoritarian systems, Communism and Catholicism.

Nichols agrees with O'Neill in acknowledging the peril of "the naively dogmatic secular viewpoint" of Blanshard. Like Blanshard, he essays to show the peril of Catholicism to democracy. But unlike Blanshard, instead of featuring the most disagreeable utterances from the interior of Political Confessionalism, he is perhaps all the more effective for showing how over and over again precisely the constructive and the irenic in Catholicism is checked or condemned at the very moment when it might be socially significant.

He assails the Church both at home and abroad which inexorably, almost as by reflex action, misconstrues and frustrates those repeated efforts from within the Roman fold itself to recall the Church to one of her proper temporal missions—the extension of brotherhood and the defense of human liberty. By concentrating on the failures and disappointments of what he holds as the best in Catholicism, Nichols is much more devastating in his effect than Blanshard who specializes in the worst.

³⁹ Nichols' book was violently reviewed by O'Neill under the heading "Scholarship and Emotional Voltage," *Thought*, XXVI (1951/2), 589-97. The review article concludes: "Unless responsible Protestant scholars will take the trouble carefully to examine such work as *Democracy and the Churches*, and be willing to recognize it for the perversion of Catholicism and American history which it is, the result must ultimately be worse for Protestantism than for Catholicism." For a more tempered Catholic evaluation see *Catholic Historical Review*, XXXVIII (1952/3), 331. Neither reviewer deals with Nichols' principal contention head on.

Nichols begins by disposing of the facile American correlation between an allegedly Protestant individualism and democracy. He boldly places, for the moment, the Reformed Churches and the Roman Catholic Church on the same level as *theoretical* exponents of civil freedom. The remainder of his book, however, is given over to an account of the ways in which the theocratic exclusion of all neutral, common-law spheres vitiates the social goals and achievements of the paternalistic Roman Catholic Church, which is "democratic" only (as is equally totalitarian Communism) in construing democracy as a movement *for* the people but not *of* the people. "The Marxist and Catholic theocracies ["counter-states"] accept no limits to their imperialism, no nonideological spheres (p. 158)." Nichols acknowledges the American Catholic contribution in checking the rapid erosion of natural law theory in American jurisprudence after the Civil War (p. 243). But for all its current claim to be the protagonist of natural law, Nichols avers, not Catholicism but the Anglo-American liberal tradition "maintained the *effective* respect for the moral law of nature which the Roman Catholic States had lost" (p. 140).

The tactical exclusiveness of the Catholic Church, Nichols goes on, permits it to jeopardize throughout the United States the public schools, the principal crucibles of the melting-pot process, and thereby to enlarge the fissures in American society, while Protestantism with its historic outpourings in the moralization of American democracy, has been "reluctant to retire to defensive positions when this would mean weakening still further the threatened structures of political democracy" (p. 243). At the same time Nichols is alert to the grave danger involved in the conversion of democracy into a religion and deftly draws a parallel between *l'Action française* and the "totalitarian liberalism" of John Dewey's "common faith." "In each case," he writes, "a movement fundamentally hostile to Christianity succeeded in gaining wide influence among Christian intellectuals by posing as the chief exponent of the traditional political ethics of the society—monarchism in the one case and democracy in the other" (p. 215).

Nichols is of the opinion that what we have been calling Political Confessionalism is the authentic, ever victorious, dominant factor in Roman Catholicism and that the kind of thinking which Father Murray represents (although Nichols takes no direct cognizance of him or of Critical Pluralism among Catholics) is only a recessive factor which will never find institutional expression no matter how many mutations the Church undergoes in adapting itself to a new environment.

Yet Nichols and Murray see with equal clarity the threat implicit

in the Blanshardian conversion of democracy into a kind of faith (Idealistic Secularism), and both recognize the importance of neutral and common law areas which should not be exploited ideologically in a religiously heterogeneous democratic commonwealth. And Protestant Nichols recognizes the primacy of the Church, while Catholic Murray locates the truly significant harmony of the ancient tension between Church and State within the individual, the *civis idem et christianus*. Of course, there remains the perhaps insuperable difference between the two positions in respect to the nature and the structure of the Church.

May it be hoped, however, that informed goodwill, firmness in charity on the issues of current tension, and redoubled research on either side will prevent Protestantism from reverting to mere anti-Popery or from flattening out into an uncritical ally of democratic civil religion—and will at the same time encourage the fresh vitalities represented by the Dynamic Expositors to seep into the interior of the Catholic Church and eventually to bring forth a significant restatement of papal instruction under the influence of the new currents flowing in the vigorous American branch of the Church. Clearly, it is the urgent task of more Protestant publicists, historians, and theologians to move into the middle ground of Critical Pluralism and, out of their biblical and confessional traditions and with renewed attention to our American constitutional history and experience, to elaborate fresh and comprehensive theories for the strengthening of our free commonwealth while safeguarding both the inviolability and autonomy of conscientious unbelievers and the integrity and the mission of the churches.

From Waldo Beach

NOW SIMMERING, now boiling up, the current church-state problem in America constitutes a serious dilemma for Protestantism. The thesis sketched in these few pages is that the arguments heard from both Roman Catholic and Protestant sides represent authentic aspects of a normative Christian position on church-state relations, that each has its own distortion which needs to be corrected by the other, and that somewhere between the shrill extremes voiced in debate a normative Protestant position based on Christian doctrine must be found. Not that any final fixed position is possible. The jurisdictional dispute between Caesar and God will last as long as time, and the lines change from age to age. But certainly Protestant thought in America should show a better record than its recent one in formulating a more genuinely Christian norm by which to guide its practice.

For the most part, the Protestant supposes that the matter of church-state relationship is settled by the pat formula: absolute separation. He wonders why Catholics are slow to understand the point. The Southern Baptist Convention, in assembly not many years ago, solemnly reaffirmed "its devotion to the basic American and New Testament doctrine of the absolute freedom of religion, and the absolute separation of Church and State."¹ Such resolutions are not the monopoly of Southern Baptists. The average Protestant layman and the majority of Protestant clergy would probably equate Protestantism with Separation without qualification, and applaud the *Manifesto* of the Protestants and Other Americans United for the Separation of Church and State.²

In our history, the separationist impulse sprang in many ways from a positive Protestant affirmation. The most unfortunate aspect of the present trend is that the temper of such a position has become a negative concept of separation, with an anti-Catholic animus at its heart. The symbol that has so captured the Protestant emotional loyalty as to become an unquestioned dogma is the "wall" of separation between church and

¹ *Proceedings of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1938, p. 113.

² Published in 1948. For text, see Appendix B of Joseph Dawson, *Separate Church and State Now* (1948), or pamphlet version from offices of POAU.

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state. Religion and politics must have as little as possible to do with each other, and the slightest breach in the wall must be stopped. So simple a symbol provides an escape from realities. Such a negativism is in curious contrast to the evangelical temper of the very denominations where it is strongest. The outgoing drive to infuse culture with Christianity is limited, proudly and deliberately, to nonpolitical ways, and when it comes to politics, much of the vigor of Protestant energy is expended on anti-Catholic polemic. As we shall see, there is a wise element in the case of the POAU, but its dead center is a denial rather than an affirmation, a protesting rather than a professing impulse, and therefore—despite the name—it is not Protestant in the truest sense. This was dramatized in the recent incident of the proposed Vatican appointment. "The psychological basis for much of American Protestantism lies in a negative rejection of Roman Catholicism," commented *Social Action* at the time. "The one emotional loyalty that of a certainty binds us together as Protestants . . . is the battle against Rome."³ A Protestantism sustained by a "No" rather than a "Yes" can hardly be called the full gospel. Protestantism stands for something more subtle and more positive than "absolute separation," as that phrase is usually read.

One would expect that Roman Catholicism would be perfectly clear and unambiguous in its position. But there is apparently considerable latitude of Catholic opinion in America, ranging from the blunt conservatism of American interpretations of the papal encyclicals through to liberal replies of a James O'Neill⁴ to Blanshard's charges. We are in a curious situation. Protestantism, whose historic genius would be to give many answers on the church-state question, seems to be quite too univocally separationist. Catholicism, on the other hand, which one might expect to be single-voiced, is at least in America the more equivocal.

In any case, anyone delving into the matter, at the level of theory or local practice, soon discovers that the issues joined between Protestant and Catholic are intricate. The differences cannot be resolved at the Rotarian level of "getting together," or with the polite niceties of Brotherhood Week, however valuable these may be. Brushes may come on particulars—as with the Vatican appointment, birth control legislation, or school board jousts—and the matter "solved" or not, at the legal or political level. But the underlying differences in total perspective remain, of which these disputes are the outward and visible signs. There are cru-

³ "Christian Faith and the Protestant Churches," *Social Action*, May, 1952.

⁴ O'Neill, J. M., *Catholicism and American Freedom*. Harper and Brothers, 1952.

cially different slants of meaning given to the key terms of discourse: "freedom," "authority," "the Church," "toleration," etc., so that it is rare for the Catholic and Protestant mind really to meet, even in disagreement.

The medieval world view persists in the thought-forms of the Roman Church, especially the whole concept of a single Christian Society, where any "separation" of church and state connotes roughly a diversity of function between the temporal and spiritual institutions. Yet the commonwealth as a whole is penetrated by Catholic authority and policy, which the state supports. In a religiously mixed nation, religious freedom means the divine right of the Church to be free from state control, as with the right of Catholic parents to educate their children in the faith. In brief, it means freedom for right (Catholic) belief.

Protestantism has come to give rather different meanings to these terms. The classical Reformers, of course, maintained medieval concepts of church-state relations, seeking a Protestant *corpus Christianum*, wherein freedom of conscience meant only political protection for right (Protestant) conscience. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries this meaning gave way, in the face of the pluralism of churches, to the sectarian ideal of a Christian society in which the state would protect a variety of expressions of Christianity on an equal political footing. The "sect-type" concept of the church became mixed with the "church-type" concept. Religious liberty still meant freedom for members of a Christian society to worship God according to their separate persuasions. This norm in turn gave way, through a private pietism among the devout and a bolder skepticism among the undevout, to the current democratic notion of religious liberty: that the state is neutral not only toward the varieties of religion but toward religion as such. Church and state should be completely insulated from each other. To be sure, religion is one valuable cultural activity which many citizens pursue, but it is not indispensable to the life of the state. This contemporary ideal is often associated with a gentle skepticism: "Each in his own way, or not at all. It doesn't really matter." Freedom from religion is now as much a political right as freedom for religion.

Much of the confusion in Protestantism today arises from the fact that it has acceded too readily to this secular democratic concept of church-state relationship. The usual Protestant case for "separation" is hardly distinguishable in its premises from the case made by a Paul Blanshard or a Mrs. Vashti McCollum,⁵ which has no Christian ground at all. It

⁵ See *One Woman's Fight*, Doubleday & Co., 1951.

is difficult to make out, in much liberal Protestant support of separation, those themes that can be called distinctively Protestant, as over against purely "American Way" motifs. Is the Protestant approach to church-state problems no different from that of a secular democrat?

II

Any attempt to rediscover a Protestant standard on church-state relations needs to transcend American provincialism and move to Christian theology. The first doctrine from which Protestantism starts is not Separation but the Sovereignty of God. The positive affirmation of the Kingship of God, as revealed in Christ, over all the realms of life, public and private, sacred and secular, has immediate implications for a theory of church and state. Far from excluding religion from political life, it means that ideally the public order would be infused with and guided by Christian norms, that the state be regarded as one of the divine "orders" created, judged, and redeemed by God, that the realm of Caesar is not separate from but subordinate to the realm of God. Whatever the necessary functional division of "church" from "state," as outward organizations, the Christian doctrine of God's rule over the "orders" entails the Christian's responsibility to witness to that rule *within* the state's life, and to seek legal provision for the infusion with Christian ideals of all the activities of the state affecting the spiritual well-being of its citizens. The "religion of Protestants" is certainly not only a private matter of faith, an inward way of worship; it is also an outward expression of faith in works, with unavoidable political implications.

Here is one truth in the Catholic position, sacrificed too dearly by the separationist, a truth which ecumenical Protestantism is recovering, and which needs to be made a cardinal principle of American Protestant political thought.

The second relevant Christian doctrine is that of man as sinner. The Christian lives in a fallen world, where all his institutions are tainted with pride and prejudice, where the Church as the body of Christ is a broken body, and the Christian witness a divided witness. The bedevilment of the Christian witness in the world lies not in the fact that it is many, but that each part of the body claims to be the whole, saying to the others, "I have no need of thee." The tragedy is not pluralism itself, but the warfare among the plural parts; not sects but sectarianism. The immediate political corollary of the doctrine of sin is that any just public policy must take account of this pride of church and provide a check against it.

The state must be a "dyke against sin," that is, it must protect the whole against the imperialism of the parts. The Christian, who knows that in his sin he becomes blind to his partiality, must be protected by the state from his own sin as well as the sin of others. Here is the truth of the separationist position, unrecognized by Catholics, a truth which also needs to be incorporated into a Protestant position.

The essential task of defining properly the relations of church and state is to find a dynamic position between the dialectical opposites expressed by these two doctrines, to do proximate justice to both of them. That is, a truly Protestant policy would stand neither for a unity of church with state, nor for complete separation; neither marriage nor divorce but something in between. It would support such a political arrangement as would both allow the freest possible expression of religion in public life, and careful checks against factional imperialism. Given the ecclesiastical pluralism of the American scene, the Protestant line must avoid opposite perils: on the one side a negative separationism which spells an increasing secularization of culture and an irresponsibility of churches for guiding moral decision in politics; on the other side the perils of establishment or preferential privilege for one church, which has always produced the bitter fruits of the persecutions of non-preferred churches, as well as the loss of the independent stance necessary for prophetic criticism of the state by the church. The value of this independence appears currently where the churches give real sign of resisting the sinister trend toward American thought control under the aegis of Senator McCarthy.

It is easier to spy the Scylla and Charybdis here than to plot the right course between. Nor can the rudder for this course be fixed, if Protestantism remain true to its nonlegalistic and dynamic genius. Yet in general terms a normative Protestant position can be formulated. It has been called the position of "free co-operation" between the churches and the state. As the matter was defined in an important statement of some years ago, this means that "co-operation, entered into freely by the State and Church and involving no special privilege to any Church and no threat to the religious liberty of any citizens, should be permitted."⁶ The role of the churches in such a free co-operation would be as "the conscience of the community," bringing to bear upon the political decision of its people Christian guidance and inspiration, and working with the state in those activities, such as education, penology, and legal reform, where

⁶ From a "Statement on Church and State," published in *Christianity and Crisis*, July 5, 1948, and signed by twenty-seven leading Protestant theologians.

moral and spiritual values are at stake. The role of the state in such an arrangement would be a "benevolent neutrality," i.e., a benevolence toward its religious forces as a whole, yet a strict neutrality as among particular churches.

There is no space here to go into the discussion that rages around the right meaning of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."⁷ The phrasing is sufficiently ambiguous to be twisted to contrary senses, as the Supreme Court's sharp reversal, in basic premises, from the *McCullum* to the *Zorach* decisions will illustrate. When one studies this amendment against the background of its historical circumstances and the thinking of a Jefferson or Madison, one can hardly avoid the conclusion that the intent of the First Amendment is precisely this normative position of free co-operation between church and state. The double function of the state is here represented: a dyke against an establishment of any church as the national religion, assuring freedom from ecclesiastical domination, yet at the same time provision for the free exercise of religion. The framers of this resolution were contending against Protestant "faction" (to use Madison's term) of an intensely imperialistic sort. Yet at the same time they implicitly acknowledged the Christian foundation of the American experiment.

Jefferson's opinion would fairly represent the formative sentiment of the age: "It was not . . . to be understood that instruction in religious opinion and duties was meant to be precluded by the public authorities, as indifferent to the interests of society. On the contrary, the relations which exist between Man and his Maker, and the duties resulting from those relations, are the most interesting and important to every human being, and the most incumbent on his study and investigation."⁸ Religion was for him "a supplement to law in the government of men," the "alpha and omega of the moral law." Jefferson's plan for the University of Virginia, it might be noted, would put the churches just off campus, but religion on campus.

A position of "free co-operation" has been the normal working relationship between church and state in America through the major part of our history. In the chaplaincy services, in tax exemption for churches, in

⁷ For a sampling of contrary opinions see Wilfred Parsons (S.J.), *The First Freedom*, McMullen Co., 1948, and Joseph Dawson, *Separate Church and State Now*, Richard R. Smith, 1948, and *America's Way in Church, State, and Society*, The Macmillan Company, 1953, representing the ultra-separationist line. An excellent compendium study is to be found in the Winter 1949 issue of *Law and Contemporary Problems*, "Religion and the State."

⁸ Padover, Saul (ed.), *The Complete Jefferson*. Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1943, 957-958.

symbolic inscription and ritual gesture, the government has acknowledged the validity of religion to the well-being of its people. It is only recently that both legal and popular opinion has shifted to such a "separationism" as underlies the McCollum decision. The testimony of American history as well as Christian theology require the recovery of a more positive position.

III

From the standpoint established above, one has steady footing from which to make a Christian—instead of a purely pragmatic or secular—criticism both of the "separationist" Protestants on the left and the apparent policy of the Roman Church on the right, and at the same time establish some working *rapprochement* of thought with each side.

To take the POAU as typical of the separationist position, one should quickly acknowledge the seemingly divided counsels that prevail in that organization.⁹ Nonetheless, if one may take the *Manifesto* of the POAU at its face value, and its various recent activities as typical, a negative separationism is characteristic. No doubt this position is held with integrity and a noble effort at consistency. Southern Baptists, for instance, have recently turned down Federal funds for their own hospitals and other institutions. Nor could one say that the Protestant separationist is not zealous for the inculcation of Christian values into culture. But he would limit this strictly to the agencies of church and home. Here the argument becomes unrealistic. Granted of course the prime significance of all the private agencies within American culture, the separationist underestimates the tremendous spiritual power of the public school, and the demoralizing effects of the exclusion of religion therefrom. He contributes unwittingly to religious illiteracy, the secularization of value standards in public morality, and to the rise of the new dangerous "religions" of Americanism, scientism, and humanism. The Catholic argument here is irrefutable: education cannot be religiously neutral. If it is not moving in one religious gear, it will have shifted into another. Though as a Protestant one may say that neutrality as among the various forms of the Christian tradition is relatively possible, a neutrality as to religion *per se* is not. If the public school omits religion the impression left in the public mind is that it is of negligible importance, and unworthy of respect.

The dangerous unreality of the separationist position shows up most clearly in the vexed problem of public education, but this is only Exhibit A

⁹ See, for example, the statement of John Mackay: "Religion and Government: Their Separate Spheres and Reciprocal Responsibilities," in *Theology Today*, July 1952, which is close to the "free co-operation" position.

of a larger lack of realism: its blindness to the necessity of the overlapping between the ecclesiastical and political spheres. The sectarian conviction, an important strain in the thinking of POAU, was forged in earlier centuries where a separation of provinces was more feasible. William Penn thought he solved the church-state problem neatly by saying: "God and Caesar divide the man; faith and worship belong to God, civil obedience and tribute to Caesar." Whatever the wisdom of this sectarian solution for its own day, it can hardly suffice in our own. Spiritually speaking, "we cannot separate." Church and state coincide increasingly in their realm of interest and responsibility. From the one side, the "welfare" state has been assuming larger and larger control over the private life of the citizen, and from the other, the church shows a mounting prophetic concern for the moral principles of public policy, a concern which must involve the church in some wise in politics.

The inevitability of relationship between church and state in America is ironically shown by the fact that the POAU maintains in Washington a highly influential lobby to bring pressure on the Federal Government,¹⁰ an activity which itself is in contradiction to its separationist policy. And not even the most Southern Baptist institutions are able to remain fully consistent in separation from the state: Southern Baptist churches accept tax exemption, provide ministers for the chaplaincy, and Baptist colleges do not usually decline ROTC units or Federal research grants.

From this same central ground the Protestant can without bigotry criticize many phases of Catholic policy, while also acknowledging its truths. As nearly as one can make out, the official Roman position, based on the pertinent encyclicals, would maintain that *ideally* it would be the function of the state to protect, not freedom of churches, but the true version of religion, i.e., the Roman Catholic Church. Religious liberty, as understood either in the secular or Protestant sense, is a false understanding of the true freedom for the church. Yet in practice, in an ecclesiastically mixed community, considerations of expediency and a concern for the common good dictate the Catholic acceptance of the "friendly" pattern of "separation" such as prevails in the United States.¹¹ This acceptance, however, is by way of concession to an imperfect situation, and does not qualify the permanent dogma of the Church to be the sole church and the sole saving agency of man in society. In brief, it is not unjust to claim that the strict Catholic accepts religious liberty for himself on the grounds of

¹⁰ See Luke Eberstole, *Church Lobbying in the Nation's Capital*. The Macmillan Company, 1951.

¹¹ Cf. Heinrich Rommen, *The State in Catholic Thought*. B. Herder Book Company, 1945, Chs. 15, 26.

political expediency, but would be compelled on theological grounds to deny religious liberty to others where political circumstances gave his church the dominant position. Though in America the likelihood of such dominance may be remote, and liberal Catholic pronouncements in America very soothing on this point, it is impossible to avoid such a practical conclusion from the Roman doctrine of the nature of the church and the relationship of the temporal and spiritual spheres. And it is not soothing to watch Catholic policy in action in local situations where the church is dominant.

It is precisely here, then—in the concept of the church—that a Protestant intransigence must meet Catholic intransigence. The Protestant may grant his own confusions as to what constitutes truly “the church,” but he must also insist in the name of Christ that the ecclesiastical exclusivism of the Roman Church is a demonic spiritual idolatry. What rightly irks the Protestant is the Catholic assumption that either there is one true Church or none at all, that in the religious realm a man must choose between the authority of Rome or accept complete relativism and anarchy. A Protestant can acknowledge his own past and present sins of ecclesiastical monopolism. Spiritually speaking, it may not be far from Mississippi to Boston. But that does not lessen his obligation to protest against it in another tradition. More than that, a Protestant public policy must certainly strengthen those measures of the state which stand as a “dyke against sin,” here the sin of spiritual imperialism. The Roman Church has every right privately to hold its faith that it has a monopoly on Christian truth, but it must be prevented from the outward exercise of that faith in practices that impose the results of this belief on those who do not share it.

It should be noted that this Protestant “protest” is not the same thing as the “camel’s nose” or “entering wedge” argument that is current in some Protestant writing. To argue against a proximate and moderate step on the grounds of the peril of the ultimate extremity to which that step might lead is both dangerous and unrealistic. The very framing of public policy involves the drawing of lines and compromises between competing trends and forces. Those lines are flexible, impossible to draw ahead of time. Especially is this true in respect to church-state matters, where transactions of all sorts between the state and churches are necessary. To argue, for instance, against “auxiliary services” (bus transportation, traffic protection) for Catholic parochial schools on the grounds that these constitute an “entering wedge” for a program of Catholic domination of

the school system may involve reasoning as specious as to argue against increased taxes solely because they may lead to totalitarianism. The Catholic claim for "auxiliary services" may be a perfectly fair claim to be decided by the state on its own merits, as one would decide comparable claims made for Protestant parochial schools. If on the other hand, such claims give sign of being part of a premeditated strategy of ecclesiastical imperialism, then the lines must be drawn at the point where this imperialism jeopardizes the rights of others. Protestantism should be cautious about decreeing in advance where these lines should be drawn, yet it must be prepared to draw those lines where needed in accord with the ground rules of Christian community.

IV

How might this thesis of "free co-operation" apply in practice? There is space here for only sketchy illustrations in two troubled areas, of which the area of religion and public education is by all odds the most serious and intricate.

In light of the predominance of naturalism as the "religion" underlying current public education, it is obvious that no program is feasible which can express a philosophy of education centered in the Hebrew-Christian faith yet expressive of the plural modes of that faith. The nearest proximate strategy at hand, which can do partial justice to the ideal, is something of the sort of a released-time or dismissed-time program, that has been gathering momentum for at least two decades in America, and with the *Zorach* decision seems now to be enjoying legal blessing. In the vast majority of cases, the released-time program operates with care in giving nonpreferential status to each of the three major faiths. Fractional in terms of the total curriculum, and sorry in much common performance, it does nonetheless take a step toward "the free exercise of religion" while protecting the whole against the possible aggression of one of the parts. To the extent that it receives support from the Catholic church, it represents a Roman concession to the principle of religious pluralism, and thus at least a meeting-ground for the exchanges of conviction. Ideally, to combat the divisiveness which its opponents charge is its by-product, it should be supplemented by curricular offerings of an interfaith sort.

One must not overlook, however, the serious difficulties to be encountered in the reintroduction of religion into public school life. The formula of "pluralism" is not a panacea: no instructional pluralism can

hope to be just to all the shifting shades of religious affiliation represented in an American classroom. More than that, how can one adjudicate fairly between the rights of the secularist for instruction in his "religion" versus the rights of a Christian or Jew? All the current programs have avoided this problem, for both Christian and legal opinion have provided no guidance for policy. Finally, one should not expect too much—any more than too little—from the released-time or dismissed-time programs. Children are not made Christian by being sprayed for an hour a week with biblical information. This is an argument for modesty of hopes, however, not for the omission of such instruction.

A second area where the principle of "free and nonsectarian co-operation" between church and state might be applied has to do with the right of the churches to influence social policy through public legislation. "Should the churches lobby?" is a question which most Protestants would answer in a horrified negative (except perhaps in the case of prohibition). Here again separationism is often irresponsible. Public policies on questions of vital moral concern are being made by constant pressures. Representative government is in a sense government by pressure groups. It would seem quite proper for churches to exercise the weight of their pressure on government, preferably indirectly but if necessary directly through their appropriate commissions, to secure the sort of legislation which seem to them desirable. And in fact, churches do so to a far greater extent than is popularly supposed.¹² The real question is not: may churches influence legislation, but rather, to what extent and in what manner?

Again, the ground rules of "free co-operation" provide guidance. It is entirely legitimate for churches to exercise pressure, or "lobby," for measures which represent broadly Christian and humanitarian values. It is legitimate for a church to lobby for legislation which will protect its own right to practice traditions and mores peculiar to its own faith, where those are not inimical to the public health and safety (such as for Jewish holiday privileges). It is illegitimate for a church to lobby for legislation which enacts into general law the position of one church in which other religious groups, who would be subject to that law, may not concur. At this juncture, the state must be a check against partisan and discriminatory legislation.

In the briar patches of particulars, the distinctions between these three types of legislative pressure are not as discrete as at the level of

¹² See Ebersole, *op. cit.*

theory. But in broad terms, it is evident that the churches may and should bring pressure on local, state, and federal governments to enact legislation against political corruptions, for penal reform, against racial discrimination, etc. Nothing in such measures represents the partisan concerns of one Christian group unshared or opposed by another. But where the Catholic Church succeeds in pressuring legislation on birth control restrictions, as in Massachusetts and Connecticut, or on divorce laws, where patently this legislation runs counter to conscientious Protestant or Jewish belief, the Roman Church exercises undue prerogative, and should be restrained, if it will not restrain itself. Exactly the same point holds for Protestants and prohibition legislation.

The difficulty of achieving such a limitation on partisan legislation, of course, lies in the fact that where intense beliefs on matters of morality are held, every party tends to universalize its judgments. Catholic authorities believe that contraception is against natural law where practiced by one of any faith, and that Protestants should be kept from sinning whether they will or no. Those Methodists who war against "the demon in the bottle" are inclined to feel that prohibition would be as salutary for the nation as for themselves, though Episcopalians might not concur. There is no escape from the collisions of these universalized convictions, but a larger measure of Protestant contrition can provide the sort of inward self-limitation that can sustain the outer legal limitations on partisanship, and create more of Christian community within Christian differences.

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From H. Richard Niebuhr

TOO MANY DISCUSSIONS of Protestant-Catholic relations are carried on as though the great issues that divide or unite the confessions were primarily political or cultural. The attitude of Roman Catholicism toward democratic institutions, the effectiveness of Protestantism as an agency for the preservation of civil liberties, the need for unity among all Christians in common opposition to Communism—these and like matters are debated. In this context, also, pleas for mutual toleration are made, that the national life may not be divided and political issues may remain unconfused by religious loyalties.

Both genuine Catholic and genuine Protestant Christians cannot but feel very uneasy about this way of dealing with their problem. Neither group, however dear to them their culture and their nations are, can accept as a presupposition of the whole Catholic-Protestant argument the proposition that these are the primary goods or the first objects of loyalty. For neither is toleration for the sake of maintaining political harmony the greatest of the virtues, however commendable and desirable it is in all matters that are subject to compromise. They cannot help but find occasion for humor in the intolerance of men who brook no heresies or schisms in the political realm while they constantly urge tolerance on those who are concerned "merely" with matters of religion, who condemn religious while they carry on political inquisitions. Such people look on the wars of religion in the past as though they were great follies, but regard wars for political principles as tragic necessities.

The faith that forms the common background of Catholics and Protestants and which at the same time divides them, insofar as it requires different actions from each, is, after all, a faith in nothing human but in the kingdom of God. The virtue that they seek to exercise in their relations with each other, insofar as they are Catholic and Protestant *Christians*, is not tolerance but charity. The confession of faith both groups repeat is not an oath of allegiance to a national flag (they live in many countries) but the *Credo*; and their common prayer is not "God bless America" but "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." That

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in America as elsewhere they pray for their country and seek to discharge faithfully their civil responsibilities is evident enough; but it is certain that neither Protestantism nor Catholicism is a variant form of the religion of nationalism, and that neither has defined the preservation of democracy or of any other form of government as the chief end of man. This is not to say that there are not members in both groups who are not primarily nationalists or primarily devotees of the religion of democracy or of some other human institution; but neither group as such, whether we think of it historically, geographically or credally, can be defined by reference to such aberrations.

I

When we begin—as Protestants now—to reflect upon the problem of our relations to Roman Catholics as a problem in the kingdom of God rather than in Western civilization or something of that sort, we soon discover that we are united to our apparent opponents by the very principle that also divides us, namely, by a common loyalty to the kingdom of God, or to the reign of Jesus Christ. We are required by our acknowledgement of the reality of that realm and of our duty to it to honor them as those who believe in and are loyal to the same cause. Yet we note that we are required by the specific demand that this kingdom makes upon us to contend with them, insofar as we are convinced that their understanding of the duties of citizenship contains great fallacies as a result of a certain confusion of the kingdom of God with the church. We must contend with them; for that is our duty in obedience to God as we understand this obedience—saying to them, “We must obey God rather than man” even though the man be representative of the church. Yet at the same time we recognize them as bound to us and we to them in a common life, as we are not bound to those who make the culture or the nation the supreme object of loyalty.

We may press the analogy of politics a little further: our attitude toward Roman Catholics in the kingdom of God seems to be something like the attitude of a great political party in a modern nation towards an opposing party. There may be a certain bitterness in this relation, because great issues are at stake, but there is no avoiding of the recognition that the opposing group is a part of the same commonwealth and, despite all charges of treason that are leveled against each other, the recognition is present that there is probably as much loyalty to the commonwealth in the opposition party as in our own. For Catholics and Protestants, however, the homeland is always the Divine Commonwealth.

Insofar, then, as we try to think and deal with our fellow-Christians within this context of the kingdom of God, two attitudes seem required of us in our relations with each other—the attitudes of charity and of creative conflict.

We are bound in the context of the kingdom of God to look upon Roman Catholicism with charity rather than with tolerance. Tolerance, as usually understood, is too weak a virtue for this situation. It is passive rather than active; it does not affirm the other's value but simply accepts it. The charity that is required and possible in this context is not the product of pleasant good will but rather of the experience of Divine Grace. It will appear, therefore, as gratitude for the good gifts that have been given to us through our neighbor, in this case our neighbor church. No Protestant looking at Roman Catholicism in the context of grace will be able to escape a sense of profound thankfulness to God for the values that have been mediated to him through this great Church.

He will think perhaps first of all of the Christian heritage that he has received from the ancient and medieval Catholic Church—of the liturgy, the theology, the discipline on which he with his fellow Christians continues to be dependent in his personal and in the common life. Though as Protestant he has placed the Bible far above tradition, yet he has found that he needs tradition as an illuminator of the Scriptures and so as a guide to faith and practice. However he may need to protest against any exaltation of tradition above the Scriptures, yet he continues to use the prayers, the ceremonies, the symbols, the art and many of the forms of organization that the pre-Reformation church developed. As he uses these gifts he will ask himself the question whether he would not have dissipated this heritage had not Roman Catholicism with its guardianship of these treasures been the constant companion of his Protestantism through the centuries. When he remembers what Protestantism in certain periods of extreme fervor did in the way of destroying the traditional heritage, he will be inclined to think that he owes the preservation of many of these gifts not to his own Protestant fathers but to the Roman Catholic Church.

Protestantism again must feel gratitude to God for the fact that he has given Roman Catholicism to it as its companion to prevent it from falling into anarchism. In the polarity of freedom and order, Protestantism has always tended to the side of freedom. This has been part of its mission and vocation, to preach and practice the liberty of the Christian man. But the emphasis carries hazards with it: had Protestantism not been subject to due pressure of the great unified, ordered Catholic Church,

it could easily have fallen into an even greater particularism and atomism than marks its present existence. Not only the example of unity in Roman Catholicism but the competition that this church has offered to its Christian rival in the West has contributed to the maintenance of those elements of unity and order that are present in Protestantism.

The Protestant, when his mind is illuminated by some charity, also notes that Roman Catholic theology, with its great stability, has at times maintained Christian truths close to the heart of Protestantism with greater effectiveness than Protestantism itself. There have been periods in history when the Roman Church has known, better than many of us who are outside of it, how important the truth of "justification by faith" is. When Protestantism, or parts of it, tended in the direction of humanism, it was Roman Catholicism which maintained the principle of the sovereignty of God. Sometimes it was this Roman Church, more than the Protestant, that resisted human authority when this conflicted with the authority of the word of God.

The Protestant who regards Roman Catholicism in the light of charity sees other characteristics in it than the man who approaches it with fear. Fearsomeness sees the Roman Church as a great monolithic, authoritarian structure, threatening the life of diversified evangelicalism and of pluralistic society. But love notes that this structure is by no means so centralized, unified, and militant as anxiety pictures it to be. There is a rich diversity in that Catholicism, a grand variety in the unity. Augustinianism is mated with Aristotelianism in its thought; its theology does not come to rest in a static system but is engaged in a continual dialectic; the piety of mysticism softens and enriches the piety of fideism; among Gothic structures, physical and intellectual, highly modern edifices make their appearance. There are stresses and strains, also, in this apparently single-minded movement—stresses that are good not only for those who seem to stand in its way but for the Catholic Church itself. The historic polarities of the great Church and monastic protests against its secularism, between clergy and laity, between higher and lower clergy, have their counterparts in the modern organization. The orders correct and criticize each other; anticlericalism in the movement itself is a counterpoise to clericalism. Catholic anti-Protestantism is subject to Catholic protests by those who are above all Catholic Christians.

In the light of charity the Protestant sees a Roman Catholicism that he does not need to fear. He finds within that movement itself men and groups that are as deeply concerned about what seem to him to be the

paramount interests as he is himself. Fearful Protestantism, seeing universal sinfulness, discovers in the apparent opponent only the desire for power and a threat to its own existence; believing Protestantism, aware of universal grace, marks the presence in the opponent of inner restraints upon the desire for power and discovers helpfulness rather than danger. It notes with appreciation how in history popes have tried to restrain extremist political persecutors of Protestantism, or vice versa; how Catholic laity have contended for religious freedom.

All human reality is, of course, mixed but there are always present in it not only those aspects which fear discerns but also those features that charity discovers, and fear is blinder than love is. So the Protestant, regarding Roman Catholicism in the kingdom of God, says to himself that Catholicism is present by the will of God and that it is not the divine desire that Protestantism should alone represent Christian faith. He notes that Catholicism is doing tasks which Protestantism does not and probably cannot perform; that its presence is of benefit to the Protestant churches themselves, as well as mankind at large.

II

Nevertheless the conflict remains. Protestantism continues to protest against the Roman Catholic version of the faith; it is subject to Catholic attacks upon its existence. In trying to regard this situation from the point of view of the common life in the kingdom of God, the Protestant recognizes that the vocation which he needs to carry out involves him in conflict with Roman Catholicism. He does not exist as Protestant for the sake of that conflict; to be a Protestant is not to be an anti-Catholic; he exists and his communities have their being for the sake of pointing to the positive work of God as the only Savior and only Justifier. Yet this witness involves him in antagonisms with those who seem to have another vocation, who seem to him to point more to the means of grace than to grace itself, to church more than to the church's cause.

Protest against the deification of anything finite leads him to protest against what he must regard as a divinization of the Church; to be sure, in our time, it must lead even more to protest against the divinization of the nation; but the earlier protest also remains in force. He protests against Mariolatry and the worship of the saints, though he is even more profoundly concerned to affirm and practice the sole worship of God. It is his vocation to criticize the confusion of the faith with certain philosophical and social ideas of the past though, positively, it is even more

his vocation to understand and to confess what he believes. In this situation he will always find himself in a certain conflict with Roman Catholicism; but insofar as the positive element in his vocation is in the forefront of his mind, and insofar as he is aware of other challenges to Christian faith than the one he sees in Catholicism, the conflict can be for him and his opponent a creative rather than a destructive one. On the positive side there remains great unity present among those who are divided by the secondary, though important, issues.

Protestantism, true to its past and its principle, will be less concerned to maintain political freedom of religion than it will be to exercise its duty of worshiping freely and of proclaiming its faith boldly. It did not receive religious freedom as a grant from the state, but exercised that freedom in carrying out its duty to God before any state conceded the right. Should the time come when Protestants do not exercise this freedom except when political and ecclesiastical powers permit them to do so, Protestantism will have vanished in reality, whatever vestigial remnants of a past Protestantism may remain. In America the state did not grant religious freedom to its citizens; it recognized that the right to religious freedom belongs to man as man, as citizens of the universal society, and that a state's interference with that liberty is transgression. This recognition was dependent upon the actual exercise of religious freedom and of religious responsibility by Christians during days when the state was intolerant; they had won religious freedom despite the state, not through it or because of it.

In its exercise of free religion Protestantism will doubtless always be in a certain conflict with the Roman Catholic Church since the latter believes that there can be only one "true religion," while Protestantism as such knows little about one "true religion" and is concerned with devotion to the one true God. But whatever perils Protestantism may encounter in this conflict, these will ultimately arise out of its own failures of conviction rather than out of the convictions of its opponent.

III

If we look at Protestant-Roman Catholic relations in this way it may seem to us, also, that we Protestants may be making a contribution to Roman Catholicism, and that it, in its own way, may be able to look upon us also with Christian charity while it engages with us in creative conflict. Perhaps it is part of our function as Protestants, in the present as in the past, to contribute something to the development of the church in the

world by stimulating Roman Catholicism to build up and reform its own structure as well as by advancing our movement. Certain Roman Catholic theologians have remarked that the Reformation was a great event in the life of the Catholic as well as in the life of the Protestant church, that the old Church was thoroughly reformed while a Reformed church was being founded. It is apparent, also, that Roman Catholicism is very different in spirit and action in those countries where a strong Protestantism acts as its critic and more or less friendly ally than in regions where it exists alone. So it may be that Protestant missions in South America, in Italy and Spain, will contribute more to Christianity by leading to the self-criticism of the Catholic Church in those areas than they will be able to contribute directly by building up great Protestant movements there.

If we approach Protestant-Roman Catholic relations in this mood—one of thanksgiving and of confidence that the conflict is meaningful—we shall also look forward to the future with the hope that at some time the great division in Christendom will be overcome, though as Protestants we will not be able, for the sake of unity, to abandon those principles which tend to our exclusion from the Catholic Church. For the preservation of the church's unity is a less important duty to our conscience than the proclamation of "grace alone."

The Place of Christology in Contemporary Protestantism

MARIA FUERTH SULZBACH

DURING THE LAST thirty years Protestantism has undergone a profound change. Nowhere is this change more evident than in its attitude towards Christology, the foundation of Christian faith.

The maxim "*vere Deus, vere homo*" is once again proving a stumbling block; and if nineteenth-century theology was embarrassed by the "Christ of faith" confronting the "Jesus of history," twentieth-century theology has lost most of its interest in the historical Jesus and regards the whole of the New Testament as documentary testimonies of faith. The scandalon to Christian faith is now, as it has always been, "to believe that those few years which to profane history amount to neither more nor less than any other period, are the norm and the central issue of all time."¹

Primitive Christianity already seems to have known the Christological problem in its dual form. The Synoptic Gospels point to a Christological understanding which finds God in the *man Jesus* ("Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Matt. 16:16); while according to the Fourth Gospel the *Word of God* was made *flesh* in the man Jesus (John 1:14). But it would be wrong to assume that primitive Christianity ever tried to deify the man Jesus on the one hand (Synoptics), while on the other the Fourth Gospel has tried to identify the theory of the pre-existent Logos with the man Jesus. For though the New Testament witnesses testify from opposite starting points they agree in testifying that Jesus *is* the Christ and that they found their faith through God's revelation.

There existed even in the early church two different forms of heresies (rationalization) as applied to the Gospel affirmation of "Jesus the Christ"; ancient Docetism on the one hand and ancient Ebionitism on the other. Ancient Docetism tried to identify the theories of the pre-existent Logos and that of a world Savior—a syncretistic idea prevalent in most

¹ Cullmann, O., "La Vie de Jésus et l'histoire," in *Études Évangéliques*, Faculté Libre, Aix en Provence, 1952. (English translations in this article are by the author.)

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of the Hellenistic world—with the man Jesus. In a similar way the ancient rabbis had spoken about *Memra* (the Word) or about *Shechinah* (the Glory) or about *Metatron* (the chief archangel). And because Docetism saw in the man Jesus a symbol personifying those ideas, it believed that the names "*Kyrios*," "Son of God," and "Word of God" had been awarded to Jesus for this very reason. When the Council of Chalcedon formulated the final creed of "True God and True Man" it won the battle against Docetism, by establishing the *scandalon* as the essence of the message of the New Testament and the foundation on which the Christian revelation stands.

Ancient Ebionitism did not regard the man Jesus as a symbol of a general faith or idea. Rather it saw in the simple country rabbi a personality of greatness and strength. The adoring eyes of his disciples first recognized him as a prophet akin to Elijah, and later enthusiastically identified him with the Godhead. The basis of ancient Ebionitism is the overwhelming experience of the personality of Jesus of Nazareth. And just as Docetism could forget the true humanity of Christ as the man Jesus, so Ebionitism could overlook the deity of Christ.

Both Ebionitism and Docetism have found their parallels in nineteenth- and twentieth-century theology.

I. THE JESUS OF HISTORY

Under the pressure of the post-Enlightenment movement biblical criticism turned against the Christology of the ancient church. It claimed that the affirmation *vere Deus, vere homo* was the result of syncretistic religious movements and popular philosophy; that the picture of Christ as shown by the Church Fathers was a more or less mechanical, magical, and mystical idea of salvation (*Heil*), and the incarnation of the Logos a kind of mechanical, physical combination of immortal and mortal elements in the person of the Christ.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries concentrated all of their apologetical strength on attempts to reconstruct a life of the historical Jesus. They looked at the Synoptic Gospels from the point of view of purely historical sources. In emphasizing the moral and ethical point of view, this period of theology tried to show Christ the Godhead as the simple Jewish rabbi, a unique religious personality, or a visionary prophet. Under the influence of Kantian philosophy and historical criticism there developed in Germany a school of theology which aimed at drawing a picture of Jesus the man as the prototype of the highest ethical and moral

values. Ritschl's idea of Christ as "the most perfect figure on earth" and Harnack's "Essence of Christianity" are typical for the period of so-called "liberal Protestantism," for which the Christological problem found its solution in the picture of the historical Jesus. Under the influence of this theological school as described in books like those of Albert Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, scholars and laymen vied with each other in writing lives of Christ. Paul Wernle's *Jesus* and Maurice Goguel's *La vie de Jésus* are probably the latest and best of their kind.

Today this movement is dead. Even before it had expired and form criticism had shown how hopeless was the quest for the historical Jesus, Martin Kaehler, a Protestant theologian of the late nineteenth century, recognized its futility. In his book, *The So-called Historical Jesus and the Historical, Biblical Christ* (1892), he emphasized the lack of sources for any serious historical endeavor to know and describe the personality of the Jesus of history. The "historical" Christ—he said—is identical with the biblical Christ as witnessed and testified through the faith of his disciples, it is the Word which became flesh, the risen Christ. Martin Kaehler's voice was a lonely voice in his own time; but it is so no longer; for since the Jesus-of-history movement got nowhere the pendulum of theology described a complete arc, and the quest for the historical Jesus became the quest for the "Christ of faith."

During the last thirty years their exegetical work has led New Testament scholars to the conclusion that all our knowledge about Jesus the Christ is based on the faith of the first Christian community. The Gospels are mere documents of primitive Christian faith; they have a kerygmatic, but no historical basis. Even the Synoptic Gospels do not start with a documentation of a historical Jesus, but have as their basis the faith of the Apostles in Christ's death and resurrection. Even if the method of indirect reconstruction is used there is nothing much to be gained; for as Barth has said in his *Doctrine of the Word of God*, Jesus is found to be "a little commonplace alongside more than one other founder of a religion." The Gospels are not biographies, but testimonies of Christological faith as expressed by the primitive Christian community.

II. CHRISTOLOGY AND THE KERYGMA

The radical results of biblical criticism which undermined a purely historical and factual picture of Jesus as an objective and secure foundation

of Christian faith, have led today's Protestant theologians back to the Christ of faith. And just as Ebionitism in its modern form, namely as the Jesus-of-history movement, could in the last instance have omitted the *vere Deus*, so the "Christ of faith" Christology of some Protestant theologians today can forget all about the historical Jesus as the correlation of the biblical Christ. The ancient church stood up against the doctrine symbolizing abstract principles in the person of Jesus Christ. At that time the principle of the "*logos spermatikos*," the Irenaeic principle of incarnation and other Greek philosophical principles had their supporters. For the stumbling block for the Greek mind of the second century was not a general theory of salvation as symbolized in the "Word made flesh," but the man Jesus, the Jew from Nazareth.

The forerunners of the present-day "Christ of faith" Christology can be found on the one hand in philosophers like Hegel and D. F. Strauss who saw in the Christian religion an anticlimax to a philosophical absolute idea, and on the other hand in an existential thinker like Kierkegaard who insisted passionately on the "subjective inwardness" of Christian faith as a decision. He saw the existential striving of faith for which existence had changed from a possibility in the spirit to a reality in the wholeness of a person in the "subjective development of the subjectivity." The best example of this "Christ of faith" Christology which bases faith solely on man's decision for or against Christ's kerygma, can be found in the theology of Rudolf Bultmann.

Bultmann, one of the founders of the method of form criticism, recognized at an early stage in his exegetical studies of the New Testament the futility of the aims of the Jesus-of-history school. He demonstrated that the Gospels had to be regarded primarily as oral traditions in narrative form, grouped about a central strand of testimony; and that even through indirect reconstruction no objective picture of the historical Jesus could be reached. The result of his New Testament studies may be summed up in his words: "Christology is proclamation." The reality of Jesus Christ can only be experienced through the *kerygma* (preaching). For there is a complete identity between the actions of the man Jesus and the kerygma of Christ. Christ's coming was the major event for the primitive community (*Urgemeinde*). It confronted it with the decision of faith. "*Hoc est Christus cognoscere, beneficia eius cognoscere.*" This decision can only be reached as an act of faith. Confronted by the kerygma, says Bultmann, man cannot stay neutral. He has to reach a

decision, the decision of faith. For "no man having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

Though Bultmann's exegetical studies have resulted on his part in the most radical rejection of the so-called factual, historical New Testament foundation, he has not succumbed to any form of modern Docetism. Again and again he points to the kerygma as opposed to any human philosophy. "The kerygma is not concerned with general truths, nor with any specific ideas about God or salvation; rather it emphasizes an historical event . . . viz. that God has redeemed the world through Jesus Christ and that the hour of decision is at hand through the proclamation of the Word of God."² Christology is in Bultmann's understanding neither the theoretical expression of practical piety, nor the philosophical speculation about the godlike nature of Christ. It is the Word said unto each of us, that God "has reconciled us to himself, by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:18).

Because of the complete identity of the words and actions of Jesus, the kerygma, says Bultmann, can never be equated with any specific theoretical idea. We cannot say, for instance, that the moral laws of the Sermon on the Mount, or the eschatological message of Mark 13, or the love of God, or the love of one's neighbor are the gist of the kerygma. The importance of all these diverse testimonies lie in their relationship to Jesus Christ. Even where Bultmann has proposed the "demythologizing" (*Entmythologisierung*) of the cosmogony of the New Testament, he has in mind only the Jewish-gnostical cosmogony of Paul. For he believes that the mythological language of Jewish gnosticism can only detract from the importance of the kerygma and put obstacles in the way of minds trained in today's natural sciences.

Oscar Cullmann is another of today's leading exegetical scholars. His Christological interpretation comes very close to that of the Fourth Gospel. This Gospel was written, according to Cullmann, from the point of view that there exists a relation between a unique historical event and a general plan of salvation; for he who says "Jesus" says "history," and the historical man Jesus is the Christ. According to Cullmann, the essential difference between the Christology of the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic Gospels is John's own consciousness of being inspired by the Holy Spirit. Jesus and the Christ are essentially and inescapably linked together. Only through the Holy Spirit can Jesus' life be grasped. The Spirit is the key

² Bultmann, R., "Die Bedeutung des geschichtlichen Jesus für die Theologie des Paulus" in *Jesus Christus im Zeugnis der heiligen Schrift*. Munich, 1936, p. 267.

to unlock the door; there is no faith without it. For we know that even the eyes of the apostles who have seen Jesus in the flesh remain blind without it (John 14:26; John 16:12, 13).

In the entire Fourth Gospel, according to Cullmann, there exists an analogy between the sacraments and the church on the one hand and the miracles of Jesus—the man of history—on the other. Nowhere else are fact and interpretation, Jesus the man of history and the Christ of faith, the Christ of the primitive church, as inescapably linked together as in the Fourth Gospel. The miracle of the marriage of Cana is related to the Eucharist, the meal with the Christ; and both baptism and the Eucharist are related to Christ's death, in the same way as the historical deeds of Jesus are related to the eternal Christ. The Fourth Gospel deals with the importance of the sacraments and it demonstrates the unity of the "*vere deus, vere homo*" through the sacramental idea. He who says "Jesus" says "history," and he who says "Christ" refers to the community of the believers, to the primitive church.

"But it is on the basis of Jesus' life that this identity is demonstrated when, facing death, Jesus does not leave his flock orphaned. His promise to return in the near future reveals a new meaning. . . . It refers to His return after the resurrection: At Easter to His final return with the Parousia; during the time in between to the return in spirit which materializes in the sacrament. The cult of the community is actually the anticipation of the final event."³

Cullmann's understanding of the Fourth Gospel's Christology and the importance of the sacraments points to some of the differences existing between him and Bultmann, who understands the Fourth Gospel only as dealing with the "revelation of the Word." But both Bultmann and Cullmann very consciously keep clear from all Docetism by emphasizing the *scandalon* of the Jesus of history.

III. DOCETISM IN A NEW GARB

Not so Paul Tillich. In his *Systematic Theology* he distinguishes between fact and interpretation. Though Jesus is the historical fact on which all interpretation of the Christian faith is based, it is of no major importance. Not Jesus but the Christ as the interpretation of the "fact," is the cornerstone of all Christian thought and faith. Tillich's theology is not essentially based on the kerygma as it is given to us in the Gospels. It is not biblical; it is based on the "picture of Jesus as the Christ." For

³ Cullmann, O., *Les Sacraments dans l'Évangile Johannique*. Paris, 1953, p. 82.

"He who is Christ is He who brings the new eon, the new reality."⁴ In adopting this point of view, Tillich seems to get rid of the ancient stumbling block which after all has always been contained in the "*vere homo, vere deus*." There is a basic difference between the Gospel's idea of the incarnation, "the Word made flesh" as a *historical* object with corporeality, and the *interpreted* picture of this reality, even if it is interpreted by faith alone. Tillich's ontology of "the new being," the basis of his theology as far as it is Christological, is clearly indifferent toward all that the name "Jesus" stands for.

For Tillich the humanity of Jesus is unimportant. This is the reason why his Christology is not only different from that of the two great exegetical scholars Bultmann and Cullmann, but different from the testimonies contained both in the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel. For the Synoptic Gospels testify to the *man* Jesus of Nazareth who is the Son of God and the Word of God which was made flesh; and the Fourth Gospel testifies to the "Word of God" as being identical with this man who is called Jesus of Nazareth. Nowhere in the Gospels are there any testimonies to the effect that Jesus the man was at any given moment unimportant or less important than Jesus the Christ. When the Gospels said, "Jesus Christ is Lord," they intended to emphasize their opposition to early Docetism, which even at that time tried to demonstrate the insignificance of the man Jesus. The earliest Christian confessions concur in affirming that in the man Jesus and only in him they saw and witnessed the Son of God: "Jesus is Lord."

It seems obvious to this author that Tillich's Christology is to a certain extent Docetism in a modern garb. While Bultmann and Cullmann have always drawn the conclusion from the New Testament sources that in Jesus and the Christ historical fact and interpretation are so closely interwoven that they cannot and should not be separated, Tillich has based his Christology on the "*biblical picture of the Christ*." Thereby Christ, "the new being," becomes in truth the foundation of Christian faith, while the historical fact of Jesus, though not outspokenly, is dismissed and becomes in truth irrelevant. The understanding of all New Testament words, as for instance Matt. 16:16, "Thou art the Christ," is for Tillich basically a personification of an idea, the idea of "Christ the new being." It is therefore more or less accidental that the personification of this idea takes place in Jesus of Nazareth; and therefore the concrete and historical

⁴ *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I, p. 49. Chicago University Press, 1951.

reality of Jesus becomes in the end irrelevant. The foundation of Christian faith and thought is the *Idea* symbolized in the man Jesus.

IV. CHRISTOLOGY AND REVELATION

There can be no doubt that among contemporary Protestant theological systems, Karl Barth's theology is the most Christocentric. He has tried to unmask all the idols of his time, such as "experience," "progress," "history," and to re-establish God's absolute, sovereign transcendence; and he has then proceeded in building the huge structure of his dogmatics around a Christological center. Though he is very much aware that all human understanding and interpretation of New Testament sources is shaped naturally by our own thought form (as the two great Reformers, Luther and Calvin, were Platonists and Bultmann's form-history interpretation is influenced by Heidegger), he tries to steer clear of both Ebionitism and Docetism in modern garb. Barth points to the two converging New Testament testimonies: the man Jesus of Nazareth is the Word of God and the Son of God (Synoptic Gospels), or the Word of God and the Son of God was made flesh in this man Jesus of Nazareth (Fourth Gospel). He emphasizes that these two testimonies are not antithetical. For the kerygma of the Synoptic Gospels does not testify to a Gospel of Jesus which is not also identical with the Gospel of Christ, the Son of God, and nowhere is there in the New Testament a Gospel of Christ which can be separated from the Gospel dealing with the man Jesus.

The conclusion which Barth draws from the New Testament kerygma is that nowhere in the whole of the New Testament should the explicit or implicit Christological testimonies be seen in the light of general verities. There is not one main theme in the New Testament. Neither the incarnation, nor the kingdom of God, not salvation, nor the love of God, nor God's fatherhood. None of these are essential by themselves. For the subject with which the New Testament deals is neither Jesus nor the Christ, but Jesus Christ as the reality of God's revelation. This according to Barth has been the real locus of Christian authority in the primitive community and in the early church.

In contrast to other Protestant theologians, Barth does not want to be an apologist. He only points to what he believes to be the center of the New Testament. Therefore the whole of his Dogmatics is not an explanation of the contents of Christian faith but a *description* "of an unexplainable mystery which to explain would be to explain away, to

dissolve. This is the mystery of revelation of Jesus Christ, true God and true man, spoken by God to man as the word of reconciliation."⁵ The painting of the crucifixion by Mattias Gruenewald symbolizes for Barth in a unique way the essence of Christology. Here John the Baptist points with his outstretched finger to the miserable dead body of the man on the cross; for this is the mystery to which Christology is able to point. The kerygma leads us up to this point. Barth calls it the objective reality of revelation. Here, he believes, man is faced with the decision either to accept the full impact of the mystery of revelation or to analyze it and rationalize it and explain it away. The school of the "historical Jesus" and modern Docetism with its terminology of the "picture" or the "event" have chosen the latter road.

When Barth discusses "the subjective reality of revelation" he does not identify this term with personal experience. Rather it is a part of the trinitarian interpretation of his doctrine of revelation. Those human beings who are reborn in Christ through the Holy Spirit are the "children of God" who, through Jesus Christ, have become the true recipients of revelation. They have become the true witnesses of revelation. They represent the reality of the church, for they live through Christ in Christ.

V. CHRISTOLOGY AND THE CHURCH

We have now come to the end of this brief critical survey without as yet answering the question whether the change in today's theological climate has any deeper significance. Have the Protestant churches (especially in Europe) only reverted to a period in history which seems to the modern mind at best a closed book of merely historical interest? Or has the Christian church by now lost so much of its power in human affairs that it was forced to relinquish a "Jesucentric" theology of a purely moral content, one in which Christ figures as the best and purest being and the Gospels are understood as the greatest and most unique ethical document? Or has the neo-orthodox trend in the Protestant church only reverted to the notorious intellectualism of the dogma which shaped the early church?

Since the Renaissance modern man has discovered that the medieval monopoly of the Church in the fields of education and culture is ordained neither by God nor by nature. Man is able to get along both as an individual and in a group without Church guidance. Politics, the arts, and the sciences are man's, not God's or the Church's domain. The Protestant

⁵ Barth, K., *Kirchliche Dogmatik* I, 2. Zurich, 1945, p. 259.

church in its various denominational forms has accepted modern man's verdict. It has concentrated on its apologetic powers and pointed to the social and ethical side of Christian teaching in emphasizing that the "good life" in a secularized world with secularized aims could be achieved in a better, easier, and more rewarding way, if man did not stray too far away from the fold of the church. There was no mention at that time of the thorny problems of Christology. Protestantism turned humanitarian or psychological or tried to reunite science and religion in a general way. The church counted its membership and equated its rise and fall with the diminishing and growing Christian influence in a community.

The last decade has wrought great changes in Protestant theological thought. The new interest in the problems of Christology is not a return to a purely historical form of dogmatic religion; and it is not primarily an intellectual approach. It is an awakening to the truth that the apologetic zeal of modern Protestantism has often been more interested in constructing a picture of Christianity and trimming the Gospel to fit it, than in proclaiming Jesus Christ, "the Word made flesh." For it is much easier for a man inside or outside of the church to get hold of the gospel than for the gospel to get hold of him.

Since the days of Constantine, when Christianity became an accepted world religion, the church has succumbed again and again to the temptation of using the gospel for its own purposes. The medieval dispute about investiture demonstrates how the church at the height of its power was governed by the ambition of world domination. It built its Gothic cathedrals and fought its worldly battles in the name of God's glory, and it managed to forget that its strength depended on its weakness, on its very origin, viz., Jesus Christ, the word of God incarnate, crucified and risen.

If therefore, today's Protestant theologians are turning back once more to this origin, it should be a cause of rejoicing. For by doing so they consciously point to the very heart of the Church: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (II Cor. 5:19).

New Agreements in Theology

L. HAROLD DEWOLF

FEW ARTICLES are written to celebrate theological agreement. Attendants to the Queen of the Sciences have the reputation of being professional disputants, always magnifying and perpetuating differences.

We must doubtless assume a measure of blame for this reputation. We are often too ready to put a bad interpretation on other people's deeds and statements, while eagerly defending our own. In this we are all too much like nontheologians. But since the subject matter of theological discussion concerns the most sacred and also the most difficult matters, such sins in the lives of theologians have especially wide scope and unlovely implications.

Even with the best of motives, until the day when all thoughtful Christians have arrived at complete doctrinal agreement, it seems inevitable that theologians must devote a large proportion of their work to discussing their differences. Doctrine agreed upon may still be false, but it is obvious that where there is disagreement some doctrine defended *must* be false. Contrariety of doctrine is therefore the sure sign of theological work needing to be done.

Nevertheless, it is proper that occasionally, as a support to our hopes and incentive to further labor, we should observe some theological agreements actually won. This seems especially desirable just now when the question is being raised whether any significant gain has been achieved in all the recent efforts toward ecumenical understanding and unity.

It is my thesis that in the present time a number of important new agreements have been reached by theologians of widely differing traditions and methods. Knowing full well that even such a statement about agreement as I am about to make may touch off a new dispute, I believe, nevertheless, that it is true and that it ought to be made. But first a word of explanation is in order.

By "agreements" I do not mean to imply *unanimous* assent or exact identity of belief. By calling the agreements "new" I do not mean that

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the ideas have never before been proposed or even widely believed. I do mean to say that *as compared with the recent past we have, in regard to these ideas, achieved a remarkable advance in the degree of agreement and in the variety of theologians subscribing to it.* Four items of such new agreement will here be proposed for consideration.

I

First of all, it is noteworthy that theologians of the widest diversity of tradition have been discovering that the Christian gospel has radical social implications. Outstanding Lutherans and Methodists, Anglicans and Friends, Eastern Orthodox and Baptists, liberals, neo-orthodox and fundamentalists are acknowledging that to take our faith seriously requires basic and far-reaching changes in our economic, political, and cultural institutions.

For decades just before and after 1900 the principal work in theology used by Methodist seminaries and ministers was *A Compendium of Christian Theology*, by William Burton Pope.¹ In this work he included his "Christian Ethics." Of the 110 pages devoted to this subject, he allotted less than three pages to "Ethics of Social and Commercial Relations" and less than two pages to "Political Ethics." Moreover, he saw nothing in Christian teaching critical of the prevailing methods of carrying on industry and commerce. The Bible nowhere contradicts it, he was sure; indeed "in it all the laws of honest merchandise have the fullest sanction. In fact, every other theory is opposed by the tenour of Scripture."² Regarding politics he was even more conservative, devoting most of his space to urging the Christian duties of "submission," "tribute" and "patriotism," while stressing that under any government the Christian is forbidden "personal insurrection and resistance."³

Now contrast the easy-going social conformity of Pope with such a work as Reinhold Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society*⁴ or John C. Bennett's *Christian Ethics and Social Policy*⁵ or Walter G. Muelder's *Religion and Economic Responsibility*⁶ and you can see how far we have traveled since the beginning of this century.

It is not only in the American churches that the social radicalism of

¹ New York: Phillips and Hunt, 1880.

² Vol. III, p. 249.

³ Vol. III, p. 252.

⁴ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932.

⁵ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946.

⁶ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.

the gospel is being recognized. Traditionally, the Lutheran churches of the European continent have strictly refrained from criticizing the civil government and this attitude has been defended by a long line of theologians from Luther to the present century. Yet the highly respected and influential Lutheran thinker, Bishop Gustaf Aulén, can now publish such a book as *Church, Law and Society*⁷ and stir scarcely a ripple of theological protest. In this work he argues not only for the bold assumption of political responsibilities by individual Christians, but even insists that the church as church is obliged to speak out on specific economic and political issues.

Out of Eastern Orthodoxy has come that apostle of freedom, N. A. Berdyaev. He believed it impossible to separate the spiritual freedom of our Christian faith from the courageous battle for political and economic freedom. This battle must be waged against the tyranny and injustice of Czarism, Communism, and Western capitalism alike. He has made that crystal clear in his book *The Realm of the Spirit and the Realm of Caesar*⁸ and many other writings.

The most dramatic and doctrinally controversial theologian in the world today is undoubtedly Karl Barth. With all his stress on human sin and impotence, his doctrine that we live "between the times" of Christ's victory over sin at Calvary and the manifestation of that victory in his "coming again," and his neo-Calvinist emphasis on the sovereignty of God, Barth would not seem likely to be much concerned with social criticism or political action. Yet, not only does he write at length in many books and tracts for the justifying of such concern, including hundreds of pages in his *Kirchliche Dogmatik*, but he has spoken out and acted so boldly and radically in political affairs as to be hardly less controversial in politics than in theology.

Even among American fundamentalists, some who take the theological study of the Bible in dead earnest are seeing anew the radical social message of the Scriptures. Certainly no one will doubt that Fuller Theological Seminary of Pasadena, Eerdmans Publishing Company of Grand Rapids, and Park Street Church of Boston are fundamentalist institutions, nor that traditionally fundamentalism has been socially indifferent or conservative in the extreme. Yet Carl F. H. Henry, Professor of Systematic Theology at Fuller, has written a book entitled *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, pleading for bold social study and social action

⁷ Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948.

⁸ London: Gollancz, 1952. (Harper & Brothers, 1953.)

by fundamentalists. The book was published in 1947 by Eerdmans, and Harold Ockenga, the pastor of Park Street Church, commended it in a preface which included these words: "The church needs a progressive Fundamentalism with a social message."⁹

In this book, Carl Henry not only decried the "reluctance" of most fundamentalists "to come to grip with social evils,"¹⁰ but warned against "unstudied and superficial analysis of the specific modern evils."¹¹ As an example of such superficiality he reports that "one recent Fundamentalist discussion of the social program of the Federal Council of Churches bitterly condemns the Communist leftist trends of the group, while exhibiting a contrasting silence about the evils of a Capitalistic system from which the redemptive reference is largely abstracted."¹² Later he describes the way in which, in the great social upheavals of other centuries Christian "orthodoxy led the battle for a new order," and he pleads for conservatives of this age to meet the present crisis with an answer better than "religious escapism."¹³

It is evident that not all theologians are pressing home basic critiques of the social orders in which they find themselves. But it is also evident that most of the present theologians in the front ranks of the various doctrinal movements believe that such critiques are required if the church is to fulfill the obligations of its own faith. Anyone who has lingering doubts on this subject needs only to read the successive reports of the Advisory Commission preparing the theological message for the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches. The influential theologians composing the Commission have differed profoundly on many questions, but they speak with one voice on this social imperative of our faith.

II

A second area of widening agreement concerns the authority of the Bible.

A significant advance of the past twenty-five years has been the re-discovery of the soul-searching, experience-interpreting and life-creating truth to be found by reverent study of the Scriptures. But this does not mean that the critical advances made in biblical studies in the preceding fifty years have been lost. To be sure, every social trend has its excesses.

⁹ p. 13.

¹⁰ p. 18.

¹¹ p. 33.

¹² p. 33.

¹³ pp. 65-66.

Some theologians who have rediscovered the value of the Bible have, in their enthusiasm, fallen easily into the old uncritical, proof-texting ways. But on the principal thinkers of Christendom the liberal, critical studies of the Bible have left a deep mark. There is a radical difference between the imaginative, creative way in which a Barth, a Brunner, or a Reinhold Niebuhr uses the Bible and the way Calvin, Luther, and Wesley felt obliged to do it, even though the great Reformers were far more candidly and critically selective than most of their contemporaries.

In the present new stress on biblical truth, there is emerging a remarkable breadth of agreement on this doctrine: the authority of the distinctive Christian revelation does not reside primarily in the book which we now hold in our hands—whatever its version or language. It does reside in certain supremely revelatory events which the biblical writings report to us.

To many writers, like H. H. Rowley, T. W. Manson, and Elmer A. Leslie, this doctrine implies that we should use every possible historical and literary skill to reconstruct the historical events, in order to understand in ancient context the original intent of the biblical authors and of the oral traditions which they interpreted and recorded. Most others would grant the propriety of such reconstructions and understandings so far as they are possible. But many would doubt that concerning some of the most important matters they are possible to a very high degree. Even when they are possible, some scholars would emphasize the thought that other requirements are far more important if the essential message is to be received today. Thus Paul S. Minear stresses the reading with "eyes of faith,"¹⁴ while Barth teaches the necessity that the "Word as written" be accompanied by the "Word as preached" and the "Word as revealed," so that the God who spoke long ago may speak anew, across the centuries, to the present worshiper, despite the infinite distance which separates us from him.¹⁵

Such views may lead, as in the work of men like Minear, Rudolf Bultmann, Clarence Craig, Robert H. Pfeiffer, and John Knox, to the most searching historical criticism, without diminishing a profound personal reverence in the presence of what is regarded as divine revelation *through* the Scriptures. These men are about as far removed as possible from the slavish literalism which was so dominant in the precritical centuries. Yet they have had important roles in the great resurgence of

¹⁴ See Paul S. Minear, *Eyes of Faith*. Westminster Press, 1946.

¹⁵ See Karl Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1936.

belief in the authority of the biblical revelation. Even Barth, while apparently attaching little importance to historical criticism and sometimes using passages out of context in rather reckless fashion, still exemplifies a discriminating freedom in his study of the Scriptures which would hardly be possible if he held to a doctrine of the literal divine authority of the printed pages in his hands.

One of the most interesting movements in the direction of this agreement has gone the shortest distance, but is noteworthy because it has occurred in the most unexpected quarter, namely among the American fundamentalist leaders. It has come to clearest exposition in the preface written by Cornelius Van Til for the 1948 edition of Benjamin B. Warfield's *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*.¹⁶ Van Til is Professor of Apologetics in the ultraconservative Calvinist school, Westminster Theological Seminary of Philadelphia. The new fundamentalist theory was carefully expounded also in the book which in that same year was awarded first prize in the conservative Eerdmans Evangelical Book Award Competition, that is, *An Introduction to Christian Apologetics* by Edward John Carnell, of Fuller Theological Seminary.

This view begins with the long-familiar fundamentalist doctrine of perfect divine inspiration assuring the infallible authority of the writing in every detail. But what are the infallible Scriptures? They are said to be not the biblical books which we now possess, but the "autographa," that is the manuscripts of the original authors. It is admitted by Van Til and Carnell that in the course of many copyings errors have been introduced so that our present Bible is not infallible. At the same time they contend that God has safeguarded the essential message of salvation so that in matters important to our saving faith our present Bible is absolutely trustworthy. Carnell praises highly the work of the textual critics as having had an especially important part in guaranteeing to us the certainty of this result.

Now this view is hardly to be regarded as a stable position. The rigorous distinction Carnell makes between textual criticism, which he praises, and historical criticism, which he sharply condemns, is impossible to maintain in practice. Again, the question what can be meant by the "original" manuscripts of Genesis and many other conspicuously composite books can hardly be convincingly answered.

Nevertheless, these and other patent defects should not cause us to

¹⁶ The original edition was published posthumously under the title *Revelation and Inspiration*. Oxford University Press, 1927.

underestimate the importance of a development which leads some of the ablest fundamentalist teachers to remove their supreme commitment from the printed page in hand and begin, at least in small measure, the process of critical discrimination in the study of the Bible. One good result is that it opens the way for more real communication between them and more liberal leaders, a process devoutly to be desired for the mutual strengthening of us all in a wider Christian fellowship.

III

A third new agreement concerns the necessity of absolute commitment.

A tragedy of university life in the last generation was the mood of sophisticated indecision. Encouraged by the analogy of scientific doubt, the predominant attitude on questions of ultimate life purpose and of public policy alike was one of open-minded and easy-going tolerance. Fanaticism was regarded as the one real sin and many professors were noted for their artful fence-straddling on matters of supreme importance. At the same time, encouraged by the analogy of biological evolution, there came into great vogue the doctrine that all true progress, whether of individual or society, was accomplished gradually, by minute increments of advance. This gradualism encouraged the easy-going tendency to avoid decisive commitments, to be content with slight inclinations in the direction of truth and right, and at all times to keep open convenient ways of retreat.

These tendencies moved from the universities out into the whole fabric of society and deeply permeated the life of the churches. In the more liberal circles its effect was most clearly seen in the neglect of calls to personal repentance and avoidance of such embarrassing doctrines as Jesus' teaching about the new birth. In the conservative churches it affected most the attitudes toward social issues, such churches generally accepting social institutions as they were, or at most seeking some gradual amelioration in minor aspects, here or there.

Most theologians wrote little to challenge directly the prevailing mood, although some were not much affected by it. Then came the crisis theology of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner, with a great surge of interest in the existentialism of Søren Kierkegaard.

Both the crisis theologians and the Christian existentialists differ greatly within these schools of thought, as well as the two groups with each other. Most of their characteristic doctrines are outside the present discussion. But they are alike in this, that they stress heavily the demand

for absolute commitment. The Christian as they describe him is not a man who in some minor details of life is a little different from the non-Christian, while he is in process of further growth. Nor is he one who is characterized chiefly by thinking that on the whole certain propositions seem more probably true than others. Rather he has ventured the decisive step. He has taken sides. He has chosen Christ and entered into a solemn covenant with God which makes everything different for him, from the inside out, from his private meditations to the farthest reaches of his social relations, from now to eternity.

This doctrine has been expounded with many excesses and aberrations which are doomed. But the stress on decisive commitment is gaining ground continually. In this country, for example, it is emphasized not only by men like Reinhold Niebuhr and H. Richard Niebuhr, but also by such radically different theologians as Henry Pitney Van Dusen, Edwin Lewis, Walter M. Horton, Nels Ferré, and Edward T. Ramsdell.

History favors this insight. Recent world events must have impressed every thoughtful person with the momentous necessity of decision. In some things neutrality and tentativeness are impossible. Again and again it has been demonstrated that for individuals, churches, and nations alike there are sometimes moments when not to decide is nevertheless to decide for life or death. As a matter of fact, the universality of death itself makes it inevitable that not only part but all of every life will be given up to something. The absoluteness of this giving we cannot gainsay. We can only say to *what* we are given and whether we make the commitment with the understanding of its absolute character and in a spirit appropriate to such absoluteness.

IV

The fourth area of new agreement is in the rediscovery of the church.

Protestant Christians, from the Reformation to the present time, have found offensive the papal claim, "Outside the church there is no salvation." For in Roman Catholic usage this means that salvation is mediated exclusively by the ecclesiastical organization under the rule of the pope. In rebuking this arrogant claim, Protestants have been inclined to describe the redemptive relationship as a purely individual affair, involving a man and God. This tendency, particularly in America, was encouraged by the stress on individualism in our secular economic, political, and cultural life until it went far beyond anything envisaged by Luther or Calvin. Indeed, the extreme had become this individualistic interpretation of our faith that

many ministers found it hard to answer the claim of some men that they could be "just as good Christians alone as in the church." In some denominations, such as the Methodist bodies, very little attention was paid to doctrine concerning the church.

Contrast, then, the new stress on the church in recent Protestant thought. Of course the Anglo-Catholics would be expected to emphasize it. Undoubtedly the prominence of Anglicans in the ecumenical movement has fostered it. But under all kinds of independent auspices a similar interest has arisen. Indeed, some of the religious experiments which have most affected recent discussions of the church have been at the opposite end of the spectrum from the Anglicans, that is among the Quakers.

Of course Anglicans and Quakers have far different conceptions of the redemptive society. But the Friend, Elton Trueblood, no less than did the late Archbishop William Temple, believes in the indispensability of the Christian fellowship.¹⁷ Meanwhile, the British Methodist R. Newton Flew has written extensively on the doctrine of the church and edited an ecumenical symposium on the subject for the World Council of Churches.¹⁸ Another Methodist, J. Robert Nelson, has published recently a fine historical and critical study under the title, *The Realm of Redemption*.¹⁹ Nels Ferré's earlier book, *Christian Fellowship*,²⁰ was representative of the best thinking in the churches of congregational polity.

As signs of the present new agreement in emphasizing the indispensable significance of the church, even the books on doctrine of the church are less decisive than the central place which the church occupies in most recent general works in systematic theology. The very titles reveal this emphasis. For example, Karl Barth's multivolume work is not merely *Dogmatik*, but *Die Kirchliche Dogmatik*;²¹ Gustaf Aulén's concise interpretation of Lutheran theology is not "The Christian Faith," but *The Faith of the Christian Church*.²² Similarly, both the method and the conclusion of my own recent one-volume systematic theology required that it be called *A Theology of the Living Church*.²³ Even where the title

¹⁷ See Elton Trueblood, *Alternative to Futility*. Harper & Brothers, 1948.

¹⁸ See especially his book, *Jesus and His Church*. The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1938. The symposium is *The Nature of the Church*. London: Student Christian Movement Press, 1952. Cf. Kenneth E. Kirk (ed.), *Apostolic Ministry*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1946. Cf. also W. Norman Pittenger, *His Body the Church*. New York: Morehouse-Gorham Co., 1945.

¹⁹ London: Epworth Press, 1951.

²⁰ Harper & Brothers, 1940.

²¹ Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1932—.

²² Tr. from the 4th edition. Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1948.

²³ Harper & Brothers, 1953.

does not indicate it, however, the church is likely to be found in a highly significant place. Typical is the recent book by Harris Franklin Rall. *Religion as Salvation*²⁴ might not be expected to imply a social conception of the redemptive process. But for Dr. Rall it does, and in his preface he describes his work as "a churchly theology."

This new emphasis on the doctrine of the church is acknowledgement of the profoundly social nature of human persons. No Christian has learned his faith by himself. The historic stream of Christian fellowship, study, and testimony has brought to us the living, transforming Word of God. Without the ministry of others none of us could ever have learned of Christ. Moreover, we could not now live Christian lives in voluntary isolation from one another. For to love God is to love also our neighbors and to be drawn into the *koinonia*, the fellowship of sharing with other faithful men. In relation to this fact, the clashing conceptions of organizational forms seem more significant as barriers to the unity for which Christ prayed than for the special values of which each is regarded as guardian. There is an increasingly urgent conviction among Christians that they belong together and that men ought not to put asunder those whom God's purpose has drawn to a common supreme loyalty.

V

In the new agreements here observed we see some first fruits of the rising ecumenical spirit. Every one of them has been profoundly affected by innumerable conversations and published studies made possible by the ecumenical movement. Every one exemplifies also the great good accomplished by world-wide Christian fellowship and interchange of theological thinking.

It is noteworthy that not one of these new agreements represents the sort of colorless compromise which some skeptics predicted would be the only possible basis of ecumenical agreement. The radical Christian critique of social institutions, the reverent, glad discovery of the revealed Word reported through the Scriptures, the call for absolute commitment of faith and the vision of the present, inclusive redemptive fellowship—all these are as demanding as they are encouraging.

If these be first theological fruits of the ecumenical movement, they are sweet and nourishing. We should thank God and continue to "stay together" until "the Spirit of truth" has guided us "into all the truth."²⁵

²⁴ The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953.

²⁵ Jn. 16:13.

The Middle Kingdom

KERMIT EBY

I

WHEN I WAS A YOUNGSTER on Baugo Creek in Indiana, the tidings of the Kingdom of Heaven were never absent from my ears very long. Brethren farmers, wedded as they were to the soil, kept their inner vision trained on the heavenly promise. In the regular prayer meetings, weekly Sabbath services, frequent revival gatherings, and the annual "love feasts," heaven was the topic of talk and the hope of all hearts. So heaven came to be as real in my consciousness as haying time or the Baugo swimming hole.

As I grew older and the visiting revivalists, Brother Garber, Brother McFadden, and others turned a suitable portion of their attention to arranging for my entrance into the Kingdom, the issue became immediate and demanded a decision.

As most boys, I think, I was concerned to be approved by my family and our friends, but there was something about the usual official representatives of the Kingdom that made me hesitate to accept admittance. When I watched the rock-firm faith of my red-bearded Grandfather Schwalm, whose favorite word to me was, "Every *man* does his share," it was easy to see the beauty of brotherhood and foursquare allegiance to the Kingdom of God. Heaven was then believable. But when I watched the fat hands of Brother Garber emphasizing the certainty of God's wrath on unbelievers by tearing the leaves from the Bible one by one, I lost the vision my grandfather's character created for me. I could not believe that entry to Heaven could depend upon such indiscriminate belief in written accounts. I wondered if the Kingdom of God, and Heaven its home, were no better than the other kingdoms I had read about in my history books. I remembered the nature of the kingdom from which the Brethren had escaped by leaving Germany.

Fortunately for me, not all the Kingdom's ministers were Garbers. Brother McFadden's conception of his task was not quite so militant, so

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filled with the terrors of fear and force. He showed me another kind of Kingdom in which brotherhood seemed a good reality and service, not servitude, was the way of life. He made the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth meaningful by example. I read in the Gospels that the Kingdom of Heaven was a situation in which he who served his fellows best was to be first in honor, and the humblest to be elevated. Denying the very crux of thought control and authoritarian determination, Jesus had said, "It is not mine to give," when asked to confer honors in the Kingdom on two of his disciples. I began to get a glimmering of what that meant when Brother McFadden donned overalls in the evening and helped me with the farm chores before going down to our Baugo meeting house to preach the Kingdom. Brother McFadden could pitch hay! Sharing my work with me, he shared my life. We talked of baseball and fishing and going swimming. It seemed that all of a man's life was a part of Brother McFadden's concept of brotherhood and the Kingdom of God. I joined him and his fellows in the Brethren because I liked the idea of a fellowship dedicated to service and the search for a truly human way of behavior. His concept seemed nearer to the meaning of the Gospels.

As I studied the history of the Brethren in school and college I began to see that my early feeling of conflict between the notion of the Kingdom and the practice of those who claimed it as their goal was historically justified. But the true disparity between affirmation and practice did not come home fully to me until I, an adult, recognized that you cannot isolate your beliefs of God from the greater world around your Baugo. The simple honesty and brotherhood that prevailed to a large degree within my home community failed before the challenge of the larger society. We opposed war and bloodshed, but we built new homes and barns on war profits. We opposed military action but our youngsters accepted the draft nine to one. We acclaimed the brotherhood of man but did little politically to end segregation of the races.

When these and other paradoxes between the conception of the Kingdom and the reality of practice in its service began to be focused for me by my work in the CIO labor organization drives and visits to the Orient, I began to realize that liberal Protestants had found themselves caught between two great notions of the Kingdom without any adequate notion of their own to give them a rallying point. Borrowing from the ancient Roman Catholic Church class-system doctrine while rejecting its basis of authority, and giving a modified lip-service to the communal claims of the teachings of Jesus without the daring to accept their implications, the

Brethren—and the other Protestant denominations for the most part—were caught in a no man's land between the militant programs of Roman Catholicism and Soviet Communism. The liberal Protestant "Kingdom" was but a nebulous, hazy apparition compared to the assurances of the Mother Church that the object of life was meek endurance of social evils while awaiting eternal bliss. Their view of Heaven lacked the substance of the Communist promises of a heaven on earth, a stateless, forceless society in which all would share in a genuine brotherhood of service.

Yet I could not accept either the Roman Catholic concept or that of the Communists. For both the Commies and the Catholics were going to get to Heaven by way of dictatorships, of the church or of the proletariat. External authority was to dominate this present life. Someone was to tell us what to think and how to act. The only freedom possible in such a world is the hog-wallow freedom of contented pigs. It cancels out every precious principle of democracy, Protestantism, and liberalism.

II

I do not suggest, of course, that *all* Catholics are at all times blindly under the sway of the church. The *faith* of individuals I hold in complete respect. I am also aware that American Catholics by and large do not vote or take sides on issues along religious lines. Outside of the small, concerted group in the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and kindred organizations, there is little political unity among American Catholics as Catholics. This is not a situation necessarily confined to America. In Spain during the Civil War, Catholic Fascists fought Catholic Communists, Anarchists, and Socialists. In France and Italy today the same phenomenon appears; there are intense ideological differences between Catholics in these primarily Catholic countries.

I think that for a good majority of American Catholics, adherence to the faith does not mean blind obedience. Intelligent men of whatever religious or political persuasion think through and define their values.

Yet the dilemma of the liberal Protestant and the liberal democrat when faced with the threat of hierarchy versus Politburo, still remains. In a sense, the thoughtful Communist or Catholic would face the same dilemma. No matter how intense their faith, the democrat and/or Protestant cannot accept morally unjustifiable means to the desired end: a society of free men and equals on earth and a spiritual Heaven of freedom forever. The means cancel out the ends. Truth is not to be obtained by blind ignorance, whether it is foisted in the name of Saint Peter or of Karl Marx and

Lenin. Love is not to be attested by inquisitions and excommunications any more than it is to be attested by Siberian exile and slave labor camps. The Protestant, the democrat, and the liberal are self-dedicated to matching means to ends, to encouraging freedom by practicing it, to producing love by loving kindness toward their fellows, and to glorifying truth by constantly seeking it. They cannot accept a nonbrotherly, nonservice, non-democratic intermediate region between the present and the future.

As its leaders have boldly proclaimed, the Roman Catholic Church offers itself as an authoritarian dictatorship of human behavior, claiming heavenly ordination for its hierarchy to determine proper behavior in everything from sexual relations to economic practices. The Communist Party sets up a dictatorship as ruthless as the Church of the Inquisition, claiming that this utterly illiberal and undemocratic method will usher in the free and equalitarian society of the future. Both Church and Party speak glowingly of the Heaven they are supposed to be serving in thus undermining the natural dignity of man. Both offer a splendid vision of a promised land. Both encourage a dedication to the envisioned Kingdom that breeds fanaticism and self-abasement in the interests of the Cause. The liberal Protestant is told by both extremists that his choice must lie between these so-called "truths." Either he must accept Catholic domination and be ruled by an authoritarian hierarchy, in which case he gives up both liberty of conscience and democracy, or he must accept the Communist dictatorship of the proletariat and its philosophy of materialism, in which case he gives up freedom of choice, freedom of person, and democracy. He is supposed to be caught on the horns of this doleful dilemma, though each partisan horn-shiner declares that the other horn is ridiculous, evil, and nonhuman.

As I examined this situation, watching the behavior of the partisans at firsthand in the CIO, I grew more and more certain that the Protestant liberal concept of the Kingdom of God must be clarified if democracy were not to be lost by default. For faith is the essence of this world-wide struggle for power over men. Beyond the immediate claims of food, clothing, and shelter lies a deeper need of men. World-wide programs of economic relief and rehabilitation will not alone suffice to encourage democracy and the dignity of personal freedom. Men will go naked, starve, and die for a faith in which they see themselves—as persons—elevated and assured of their ultimate worth. Men demand that they be recognized as having ultimate importance. And ultimate importance always depends upon a concept of what is Good. Men will not long sacrifice themselves for subways,

Coca Colas, and lipstick. They will not fight bravely, suffer undespairingly, and bring to bear their full humanity triumphantly unless they have a faith transcending both the empty claims of gadget manufacturers and the cold promises of a cheerless hereafter.

This is why the Catholic Church builds magnificent cathedrals and parades its army of clerics in a rich panoply of silks and satins, symbols of the elevation which is to be the good communicant's reward. This is why the Communists succeed in winning men's minds to a dream world of self-dignity by picturing so clearly and incessantly the contrasting reality of insecurity, poverty, and moral abasement around them. Both organizations are ready to give the questioning mind pat answers and pulse-stimulating promises. Catholic Church and Communist Party exist on the dispensation of faith. They are ready with the "heavens" which the nature of men demands. Unless liberal democratic Protestantism can offer men a better vision of their destiny, these mirages of faith will triumph and the long struggle of mankind toward self-respect, self-responsibility, and self-creativity will once again be thwarted. Unless Protestantism can show that the Kingdom of God and Heaven are concepts of power *with* men and not *over* men, we shall be drugged into sightless acceptance of a new Dark Ages of human rights.

III

I have watched the opening skirmishes of the struggle between the extremes of authoritarianism, Left and Right, in the CIO. The liberals in labor are caught in a squeeze play between the disciplined Communist fanatics of the Party Line and the equally well-disciplined Papal warriors of the Association of Catholic Trade Unions. The liberal has no base of faith to which he can point with certainty. He has no rallying point to which all men of good will can repair. And this is not due to lack of opportunity to have such a base. It is due to a lack of clarification of what his bases are; and to a fear that any acceptance of an abstract principle of good will chain him to actions which are evil, even as such principles have apparently shackled Church and Party to antidemocratic, dignity-destroying practices.

This hesitancy in accepting the needed base for their policies and programs has stimulated the contempt which is heaped on the liberals for being wishy-washy. It has led to the theft of liberal slogans by both the irresponsible Left and the dogmatic Right. Their slogans have been so general, so sweeping that they could be used like multicolored blankets to cover a multitude of illiberal tendencies and projects.

As I see it, there is no escape of the liberal from the need for a forthright presentation of his conception of the Kingdom. Men are religious by nature, not by chance, and the center of all religion is the elevation of the human being to a destined importance as ruler of the universe, whether this be rationalized as absorption of his person into the Infinite, the submergence of his individuality into the social whole, or his elevation as the son of God. If the liberal wants to meet the threat of totalitarianism he must state clearly what the Good of democratic practice and liberal theory is. He must show how the practices and programs of democracy lift and elevate a man toward brotherhood and individual dignity. And these statuses are exactly what is signified by the words "sons of God."

Liberalism, Protestantism, and democracy have the greatest vision of the Kingdom of God implicit within their general teachings. It needs only to be made explicit. Articulated adequately, that vision is a concept of both a future and a present "heaven," a "kingdom" that is a republic, a republic of service and a democracy of love. Long ago it was formulated in parable and metaphor by Jesus of Nazareth. It has no necessity for a hierarchical command or a social dictatorship to support it. Neither Pope nor Politburo, inquisition nor secret police are needed to defend it. For the Kingdom of God as Jesus taught it was no empire where the ruled and rulers were separated and accorded different statuses. It was no dreamland "over there" in which all the evils inherent in the present world were magically to disappear. It was no offer of future bliss in exchange for present poverty, degradation, and loathsome submission to arbitrary authority, whether of priests or political pulpитеers. Rather it was a forthright call for men to stand up square to the demands of freedom and self-respect and to accept the responsibilities of individual sons of God and brothers of all men.

For the Kingdom of God, Jesus says, is *within* you. And the Greek may be translated not only "within" but "among" you, in the fellowship of peers as well as in the fellowship of an individual man with his God. The shock of recognition, the point of no return, the beginning of realistic endeavor, comes when the force of events and the force of inner conviction merge. Heaven is in your heart, capable of immediate growth and development if its seed be watered by the deeds, the acts, the relationship with others, which elevate or defile a man. For cant and mystery Jesus substituted plain common sense and the essential view of humanity as a growing reality, a developing power and dignity in individual men, and a spreading sense of fellowship and love among all men. This is the essence of liberalism, democracy, and Protestantism.

If liberalism and democracy are to prevail over the cuttle-fish forces of totalitarian obscurantism and deliberate indoctrination, it is this view of the Kingdom which must provide the religious base for democratic faith. It is nonsense to suppose that liberalism, secularism, or American democracy have not had and do not now need such a base of religious spirit. The very notions of freedom, equality, and fraternity deny such assumption. These are deeply felt aspects of actual life, as real as food and as forceful as tides, yet they are expressions of faith in the ultimate nature of men, in the destiny of men. They are essentially religious because they are spiritual concepts, immeasurable and beyond computation. They cannot be matters of degree or of unit measurement. They are as inseparable and indivisible as the human person himself.

IV

In the years of our nation's birth, the man Thomas Jefferson wrestled with the problem of giving democracy and liberalism its proper religious focus. He was aware of the difficulty of escaping the dogmatic extremes. Finally he found the essential base of his own democratic liberalism in the teaching of Jesus. "I believe," wrote Jefferson, "that he who steadily observes those moral precepts in which all religions concur, will never be questioned at the gates of heaven, as to the dogmas in which they all differ." After compiling a list of the teachings of Jesus in chronological and subject order, Jefferson said, "A more beautiful or precious morsel of ethics I have never seen; it is a document in proof that *I* am a *real* Christian, that is to say, a disciple of the teachings of Jesus."

Against the "deliria of crazy imaginations" of such characters as Calvin and other sectarians whose doctrines, said Jefferson, were "as foreign from Christianity as is that of Mahomet," Americans should take their stand on the ethics of Jesus: "to love God with all thy heart and thy neighbors as thyself, is the sum of religion." To oppose the obscurantism and intolerance of the sectarian churches, Catholic and Protestant, it is vital for democracy to practice religious freedom and to enlighten the whole people through universal secular education. "Religious freedom," Jefferson wrote a friend, "is the most effectual anodyne against religious dissension." Education is the support of tolerance and freedom, the only secure base for freedom of conscience and religious faith.

This man who most clearly understood what kind of man and society American democracy would breed thus set forth the essential practices which would bring into being a true service to the "kingdom" of God. That Jefferson's doctrine should clearly outline a republic and not a kingdom

is not strange when we consider that Jesus, in describing the Kingdom of God, equally clearly pictures a democratic republic though none existed anywhere in the world in his day. In the "kingdom" described by Jesus, service to one's fellow men is the criterion of honor and distinction. He indicated that it was devotion to this Good implicit in the nature of the individual which rendered the honor when he said, "it (the honor) shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father," and identified men with God the Father. Devotion to the "kingdom" of heaven within the human heart led of itself to love of one's fellow man, for God was love and truth, and men the sons of creativity itself.

This "kingdom" of the heart, which could not, Jesus taught, be found by observation with eyes or ears but only by looking within one's self, is the true claim and heritage of democratic men. It is the "kingdom" of service in which the servant is honored and to which the sluggard "rich man" finds such difficult entry. It is the "kingdom" of little children, guileless and loving, filled with the curiosity of wonder at the marvels of creation. Against the monstrosities of authoritarian enslavement to hierarchy and totalitarian control by dictators, it poses the democratic means of constant search for truth, of universal education, of tolerant live-and-let-live compromise, and love of and service to one's fellows. This is the Jeffersonian, the democratic, the Protestant alternative to the "kingdoms" that are supported by ignorance, suppression, and slavery.

Between the extremes of Right and Left, with their disastrous use of dictatorial means toward their perfectionist goals, this middle "kingdom" shines like a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of rainbow by day. It offers a solid democratic base, a secure democratic goal, and a democratic way of reaching the human objective of the dignity of man and the love of God. The Middle Kingdom is the Republic of Man.

King Arthur in Connecticut

DANIEL C. TUTTLE

IS THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH today so successful in winning converts? The opinion is widespread that it is. One would think from the daily newspapers and some news magazines that the Catholic Church is rapidly becoming the dominant religious force in this country. Conversions of famous men and women are widely publicized. Statistics are periodically released indicating that many thousands are becoming communicants of the Church each year; the implication being that this is to be explained by a widespread defection from Protestantism.

Just what are the facts? How effective is the propaganda released by the Roman Catholic Church? How many are being won from Protestantism to the "Mother" Church? Let us consider that question without rancor, and without being sidetracked into denunciation which would generate much heat but little light.

Let us, too, endeavor to be fair to the Roman Church. There is nothing to be gained by enlarging upon the condition of the Church prior to the Counter-Reformation, or its sorry state in Spain and Latin America today. Let us confine ourselves to the Catholic Church as it is to be found in English-speaking lands at the present time. That church, like the Protestant, has a right to be judged by its best manifestations, not its worst. We Protestants would not like to have our branch of the church appraised on the basis of the witch-hunts of the seventeenth century, for example, or the sterility of continental "rationalism" during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is probable that there has never been, in the history of the Catholic Church, a higher form of faith and life than is to be found in American Catholicism at its best today.

So then, let us admit that there are many non-Catholics, probably thousands, who do each year find peace of soul in the folds of the Catholic Church. To deny this would be foolhardy. It would be strange indeed, if in a day of unrest and spiritual turmoil, an organization as ably staffed as is the Catholic Church did not make a substantial impact upon its environment.

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But let us not forget that the reverse is also true. Former Roman Catholics, in large numbers, are turning away from their church, and looking to Protestantism for exactly the same reasons which lead people *into* the church of Rome. Any local pastor could name several substantial members of his church who are former Catholics. In addition to these, there are many, and their number seems to be increasing, who are drifting away from the Catholic Church, but are not being drawn to Protestantism.

However, this fact does not alter a situation with which we Protestants must be concerned: the fact, as noted above, that many intelligent people are not finding in our churches that which their spirits seek, and they *are* finding it in the Catholic Church. It is futile to shut our eyes to this, or to denounce these converts as superstitious and ignorant. They are not. Many of them are intellectual leaders, well educated. Why are they turning to Rome instead of to our churches?

I

Within the last few years, a number of books have been written by Roman Catholic converts, telling of their spiritual pilgrimage. The reading of those books is very enlightening. So numerous and so well written are these accounts that we almost agree with Bishop Sheen, in his introduction to the spiritual biography of a Jewish psychiatrist now in a Trappist monastery: "Practically no one ever writes the story of his conversion into any sect, but only when he comes into the Catholic Church."¹ Of course that isn't true, but these testimonies are well worth reading just the same.

In view of the experiences set forth in this group of two dozen or so books, what is the secret of the appeal of the Roman Catholic Church to prospective converts? The answer to this question seems to be fivefold:

1. *The Universality of the Roman Catholic Church.*

Without exception, these spiritual pilgrims have felt a sense of bewilderment as they faced a divided and warring world. They were confused by the divisions within Protestantism. "The Protestants were divided into hundreds of disagreeing sects."² "I came to appreciate more and more the unity of the Catholic Faith. The same Faith . . . is taught in every Catholic parish by every Catholic priest throughout the entire world."³ Those who have become communicants testify repeatedly to their sense of security in a faith which is world-wide, so that no matter

¹ Father M. Raphael Simon, *The Glory of Thy People*. The Macmillan Company, 1948, p. ix.

² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

what land they might visit, they would be sure of finding nearby a Catholic church, where the same mass would be celebrated in the same language. Even more important in their minds is the unity (apparent at least) of Catholic doctrine. "I compared her unity with the complete lack of it outside," writes a former clergyman of the Church of England.⁴

2. *Its Intolerance.*

Strangely enough, the very thing which most irritates outsiders is one of the strongest points of appeal to the convert: the Catholic Church's claim to be the *only* church, and to have alone the truth of the Gospel. Writer after writer says that Protestantism cannot possibly be right because it is divided, and because it does not claim to have a monopoly on the truth. Since The Church has the truth, and none of the "sects" do, it is justified in persecuting them and wiping them out if possible. "Can the true church allow heresy and evil doctrine to exist?"

It is seemingly a trend of our time, when so many landmarks have been swept away, for human souls to seek something stable and unchanging. These writing converts are all men and women of high character and ability, but it is impossible to escape the conclusion that they have taken refuge in the Church because they were exhausted by the turmoil of the last two decades; that their spirits are tired of struggling; that they can no longer face the necessity of having to make decisions. They welcome an arbiter, one who can *tell* them. They are tired of having to face crises.

The converted Anglican clergyman quoted above writes, "The Church is God's mouthpiece—His voice. Could God's voice speak untruth? Protestantism, claiming the Holy Ghost and presenting a jumble of contradictions, declares, in effect that God *does* speak untruth."⁵ Louis F. Budenz, who left the Catholic church of his youth in a vain search for social justice in the Communist Party, finally returned to his childhood church, with these words: "For him who wants internal peace and spiritual sanity, his sanctuary must be the Catholic Church."⁶

3. *The Beauty of Holiness.*

Writer after writer tells of the vain quest for beauty and meaning, and a sense of the Divine Presence, in Protestant churches, and the final discovery of it in the Church of Rome. One of the best sellers among non-fiction books a few years ago was *The Seven Storey Mountain*, the story

⁴ Fr. John O'Hara, ed., *The Road to Damascus*, chapter by Owen Francis Dudley, p. 140.

⁵ *The Road to Damascus*, p. 143.

⁶ Budenz, Louis F., *This Is My Story*. McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1947, p. 326.

of how a sophisticated, pleasure-loving young man turned his back upon the worldly life he had known and became, like the Jewish psychiatrist mentioned above, a Trappist monk. He tells of seeking for a sense of reality in Protestant churches, and his failure to find it. Finally, he went into a Catholic church on Sunday morning. "What a revelation it was, to discover so many ordinary people in a place together, more conscious of God than of one another: not there to show off their hats or their clothes, but to pray."⁷

Mr. Budenz speaks of the same thing: "What I want to do is to signalize the overwhelming fact that the Catholic Church can't be passed by when beauty is sought even by many who do not understand and many who only partially understand her divine mission."⁸

That intangible something which sets a Catholic church building apart from all other places of worship is amusingly described by the eminent American novelist, Mrs. Frances Parkinson Keyes, in telling of her own conversion. She relates a story told her by the pastor of a Protestant church in Washington, D. C., which is located next door to a Catholic church of similar outward appearance. Two young Catholic children went into the Protestant church by mistake. "Upon looking up to the place where they expected to see the altar, they beheld only a formidable array of organ pipes." They rose from their knees and hurried out, meeting the pastor as they approached the door. "Observing their manifest distress, he asked if there were anything he could do to help them. 'Oh, sir,' one of them exclaimed, 'we wanted to talk to God, but we don't find Him!'"⁹

4. *A Demanding Faith.*

If there is any one thing mentioned by all as being instrumental in leading them to Rome, it is this: That the Catholic Church made high demands on them, while the Protestant church, as they had observed it, did not. Some of their words are not pleasant reading for Protestants:

"There were well-meaning souls . . . who sought privately to induce me to join the Episcopal church," writes Mr. Budenz. "They presented a picture of a comfortable, flabby code in which one might hold almost any sort of doctrine. These offers were rejected with a touch of kindly scorn. 'You would have me accept a religion that puts one on soft

⁷ Merton, Thomas, *The Seven Storey Mountain*. New American Library edition, 1952, p. 251.

⁸ *This Is My Story*, p. 358.

⁹ *The Road to Damascus*, p. 60.

cushions, whereas the merit of Catholicism is that it says without equivocation that if you wish to rise you must first take to your knees."¹⁰

"The Catholic Church, when she defines a doctrine of faith or morals, when she tells us what to believe and what to do—in a word, what the Christian religion is . . . is prevented by God from making a mistake."¹¹

Gretta Palmer, well-known magazine article writer, says, "I discovered that, historically speaking, people seem to *leave* the church because they want forbidden things, never because they want a deeper truth. I found that people *enter* the Church because they want the fulfillment of either heart or brain or soul."¹²

No, these books are not easy reading for Protestants; partly because we would like a chance to answer back—but even more, because so many of the things they find amiss with the Protestant church are only too prevalent. We must plead guilty to the indictment.

Thomas Merton, the young esthete who became a Trappist monk, tried attending a Protestant church in New York City for several months. The church had an able and cultured minister, but "it was modern literature and politics that he talked about, not religion and God. You felt that the man did not know his vocation, did not know what he was supposed to be. He had taken upon himself some function in society, which was not his and which was, indeed, not a necessary function at all."¹³ What a misfortune that it had to be *that particular church*, wherever it was, that Thomas Merton tried!

A leading historian writes of the Protestantism he encountered in his college chapel: "What flourished on the campus was a rather denatured, modernized, illusive Protestantism. Those who taught it seemed vague and uncertain."¹⁴ The English novelist, Evelyn Waugh, is even more outspoken: "There came to my school a leading Oxford theologian, now a bishop. This learned and devout man made me an atheist."¹⁵

Each one of these pilgrims in quest of faith searched for a haven in the Protestant church, and failed to find it, for one of three reasons: (1) seeming lack of faith among the members of the Protestant church, (2) shallowness and uncertainty of our theology, (3) lack of a worthy challenge to discipleship. "It doesn't cost anything to be a Protestant."

¹⁰ *This Is My Story*, p. 57.

¹¹ *The Road to Damascus*, p. 143.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹³ *The Seven Storey Mountain*, p. 214.

¹⁴ *The Road to Damascus*, p. 75.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

We have examined at some length, the motives which have led some of these men and women to join the Catholic Church. Such an examination is far from a negative approach or a "post-mortem." For it must lead us on to an examination of our own personal Christian lives and the churches to which we belong. What is wrong with us, and with our churches, that people seek in vain for indication that we have walked with the Christ?

Books, such as those examined so cursorily above, should be required reading for every Protestant. And that reading should be a humbling experience. It should lead us back to the sources of our faith, and to a deepening of the spiritual roots upon which our souls have fed. If we are no better Christians than *that*, there needs to be a revival in the church, and it needs to begin with us.

Is it perhaps true that we have lost the vision, and that the Catholic Church has gained it? Are they going to outstrip us after all in the race to recruit new members? Are they going to take away from us the cream of our own churches? These are questions that we must face. It is hard to be without bias in such a matter. But it is apparent, in reading these spiritual accounts, that the writers have been driven to the Catholic Church not because they found something there really challenging, but because they had found nothing at all in the Protestant church. True, they didn't look in the right places; but they had to judge Protestantism by what they saw of it.

II

The growth of Catholicism in the United States may be likened to the growth of totalitarianism in some European democracies. It has prospered, not because of its own inherent strength, but because of the impotence and spiritual bankruptcy of the moribund faith upon which it fed.

No, the Catholic Church is not the solution to the spiritual problem of America. This country will never become Catholic, even in desperation. For the Roman Catholic Church is an anachronism. It is not true, as claimed by its spokesmen, that its patterns and methods are timeless and changeless. They are medieval, in spite of their indignation at being so termed. The Catholic Church rose to greatness in a feudal age, for its whole scheme of organization and operation is feudal. When the Renaissance came, the Protestant Reformation had to follow. Today the Roman Catholic Church is as outmoded as is the crossbow and the battle-axe.

The Catholic Church, by the very intolerance and dogmatism which appeal to so many of the converts quoted in this article, is repellant to most

moderns, even second-generation immigrants from Catholic lands. As a result, the Church is losing every year more than it is gaining.

It is a foreign church, and has never made the transition to American thought patterns. Dominated by an Italian hierarchy, its liturgy in an unknown tongue, its ritualism and symbolism beautiful but exotic, it can never have widespread appeal to the people of our land.

It is a significant fact, which has often been pointed out, that Catholicism has always had an affinity for lands with a totalitarian government, and that (in spite of its present crusade against Communism) Communism has made its greatest inroads in Catholic countries, while it has been comparatively powerless against a strong Protestant faith. Catholicism is by its very nature authoritarian, the negation of the democratic aspirations which have been the very cornerstone of our American civilization. It is a significant fact that devout men and women in considerable numbers are turning away from the Catholic Church to some Protestant group for one reason: there is so little opportunity in the Catholic Church for lay workers and leadership. They are faced with a situation where, if they desire to take an active part in the work of the Church, they must actually become priests or nuns, or join some church order. These sincere Catholics wish to serve their Savior in a worth-while way, and they find nothing particularly challenging in peddling lottery tickets to pay for a new parish hall.

A lamentable accident was reported in the *New York Times* of Monday, October 2, 1951. A portion of the roof of a Roman Catholic church in Buenos Aires collapsed during mass, burying many in the wreckage. "It was believed that the foundations of the church had been weakened by vibrations from heavy traffic which passes nearby." That seems to be a parable of the Catholic Church in our time throughout the world. Its foundations are undermined whenever there is "heavy traffic which passes nearby."

In Mark Twain's book, *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court*, a young mechanic who lived in our modern times was miraculously transported to the medieval kingdom of King Arthur. His attempts to streamline court life and to set the kingdom on a scientific, up-to-date basis ended in chaos.

In the Roman Catholic Church in America we see the reverse process. A medieval, feudal ecclesiasticism is attempting, not to adapt itself to the time in which it finds itself, nor to bring the Gospel of Christ to a new age in language and patterns that will be intelligible. It inflexibly insists upon modern man bowing to its own thought patterns, adjusting himself

to the Church as to a Procrustean bed. The position of the Catholic Church is typified by those famous Swiss guards at the Vatican. In the center of a large, modern city, the Vatican stands aloof in haughty grandeur, guarded by those Swiss soldiers of the Middle Ages, a relic of the past, uniformed in scarlet doublets and white ruffs, armed with halberds and spears. There is an air of unreality about it all. For "the foundations of the church have been weakened by vibrations from heavy traffic that passes nearby."

The Roman Catholic Church has had a great history, with all its imperfections. But its day is long since over. In the kindly words of a great Protestant historian of the church, Philip Schaff: "All honor to the Catholic Church and her inestimable services to humanity. But Christianity is far broader and deeper than any ecclesiastical organizations. It burst the shell of medieval forms."¹⁶

Because Christianity did burst its medieval shell we are Protestants, and have been given by Divine Commission the task of evangelizing this generation. We are not doing a very good job. The measure of success that the Catholic Church may have in proselyting in our land is a reproach upon us. Statistics of the growth of that church *are* impressive, but they are a proof, not of the Catholic Church's success, but of our failure.

Shades of Luther and of Calvin! What *is* there about our modern Protestantism to attract people? The spectacle of a church hopelessly divided, its factions warring among themselves? Public worship services which often seem to the Catholic visitor an impious parody of the solemnity of his own church, "and the Spirit of God is not there"? Preoccupation with unimportant splinters of doctrine? Soothing sermons that regale the hearer with a pleasant diet of "Peace of Mind"? Church members who give little indication by the way they live that they have been with Christ?

Is *that* the kind of burning faith that sent John Huss to the stake, and empowered Martin Luther to stand before the emperor at the Diet of Worms, and say, "God help me; I can do no other"?

Is *this* Protestantism? Or is it the overwhelming faith that nothing today is as important as the salvation of human souls? That something so important and so powerful came into the world in the person of Jesus Christ, that life can never again be the same for any person upon earth? That we can never rest until we have taken the story of his gospel to

¹⁶ Schaff, Philip, *History of the Christian Church*, Vol. VI, p. 3.

every person? That we ourselves are a living proof of his power to transform human nature? That no earthly priest or ecclesiastical order has the right or the power to stand between him and us? That *we know*, because we have *experienced*?

Too long, we Protestants have been willing to coast along on the momentum of the spiritual power of our ancestors. That momentum is no longer enough.

A strong and vital faith has nothing to fear from its enemies. Protestantism's only enemy is its own weakness. Roman Catholicism can never destroy Protestantism—but you and I can. Or we can save it. If the Protestant church is to regain its position of spiritual leadership, we must show, as those early Protestants showed in their day, that we can outlive, outlove, and outlabor any other group in the world.

May we profit from these frank statements of what men and women seeking God find to be lacking in our churches. It is our chance to put our house in order before it is too late.

Religion and One World

EDWIN T. SETTLE

I

A SPEAKER WAS ANALYZING the various causes of world unrest. He was listing the factors which divide people one from the other. He mentioned race, nationality, economic and social status. And then he spoke of religion. Religion, a factor which divides people? Somehow it struck me. There was something wrong about that. Religion ought to be a force to bring people together in understanding and brotherhood. And yet, what the speaker said was true. Religion does divide people.

In Palestine Arabs and Jews have long fought with each other. The issue? Chiefly, religious differences. Moslems and Hindus fight each other in India. And even in the melting pot of America religious differences not infrequently bar the way to the perfect fellowship men might have with one another.

Some years ago I shared in the planning of an interfaith Community Thanksgiving service. Catholics, Protestants, and Jews had agreed to participate. Prior to the service, as a gesture of good fellowship, my wife and I invited the ministers and their wives to join us at a buffet supper in our home. The Protestant ministers and their wives were present, the Catholic priest was there. But the Jewish rabbi was missing. He was a good friend of mine and I wondered what happened to him. A little later I realized his difficulty. He belonged to a strictly orthodox group which partook only of Kosher food. I respect his convictions, of course. But it made me feel a bit sad to realize that the persistence of this restriction, no longer observed by the liberal Jew, could keep us from normal fellowship.

It was the evening before our division left the stinking swamps of Louisiana after three months of winter maneuvers. I wandered into the tent of the Catholic chaplain. We were the best of friends and always enjoyed chatting together.

"Bill," I said, "if you don't mind, I would like to ask you some

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questions about your religion. Perhaps you might like to ask me some questions. As we sit here in our tents across the waters, people of different countries are fighting each other. Some day, we hope to have peace. It's my feeling that religion, if it's good for anything, ought to help to bring the peoples of the world together. Therefore, I feel that if you, a Catholic, and I, a Protestant could come to a better understanding it might help."

The tone of my friend's voice changed somewhat as he said, "It is not often that I discuss religion with those of another faith."

"Why?" I queried.

"Well," he replied, "from your point of view I am a bigot."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean," he said deliberately, "that from my point of view I have the truth and you are in error."

"Well, now," I laughed, "that does stop discussion, doesn't it? I am quite willing to grant that my little brain doesn't contain all of the truth. I would not be surprised if there were some things you could tell me that I need to know. But don't you think that there might be some things which I could tell you that you, too, might profit from knowing? Don't you think that by sharing our ideas both of us might arrive at a larger view of the truth?" He was unwilling to grant that, and so ended any possibility of better understanding.

This chaplain reflected, of course, the view of the strict Roman Catholic which asserts that only the Roman Catholic Church is the true church.

But the Roman Catholics are not alone in this point of view. One can find individuals within the smaller Protestant sects and fundamentalist branches of the larger Protestant groups who are just as sure that they are the sole repositories of truth. When I attended Chaplain School at Harvard University the administration deliberately placed together in the dormitory suites men of different religious affiliations. I am a Baptist. With me in my suite were a Methodist, a Lutheran, and a Roman Catholic priest. The priest was a short, jolly fellow with whom we enjoyed the happiest of fellowship. But we soon gathered from our Lutheran friend that only the Lutherans of his particular synod were certain to enter the pearly gates, while it seemed quite likely that the rest of us were bound for the lower regions.

A chaplain is called upon to serve men of all faiths and no faith. A good commanding officer demands that there be no partiality. I once introduced a new chaplain to our regimental commander, a man of frank

and rather profane speech but a brave soldier who gave his life in France. "Come in, chaplain," he said cordially. "We're glad to see you. We welcome every man who has religion, except the man who thinks his is the only religion. He's just a damn fool."

That was a crude way to put it, but even a slight acquaintance with the history of religions shows how foolish it is for any religion to claim that it alone is true. None of the world's great religions is now what it was in the beginning. Beliefs, organization, ceremonies have changed. All have been influenced by and have borrowed from surrounding religions and cultures. Modern Judaism, for instance, may trace its history back to contributions from the religion and culture of Egypt, from the Semitic and non-Semitic peoples who lived in the land of Palestine long before the Exodus, from countries which successively overran the little country of Palestine—Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece and Rome. Parallels (with differences, of course) to the Old Testament stories of creation, the temptation, and the flood are found in ancient Babylonian literature. Moses, brought up in the Egyptian court, was well acquainted with Egyptian culture and religion. Some scholars think that he was influenced toward monotheism by the religious reforms of Ikhnaton. The latter's "Hymn to Aton" bears a remarkable likeness to Psalm 104 of the Old Testament. Ideas of Satan, heaven, and hell—extremely vague in early Hebrew religion—took form later, according to many scholars, as a result of Hebrew contacts with Persian Zoroastrianism.

Christianity, likewise, in the course of its development has received contributions from various cultures and religions. It is most heavily indebted to the Jews. The founder of Christianity was a Jew and the earliest disciples were Jews. Christian missions began in the Jewish synagogues. There are scholars who claim that practically every teaching of the New Testament has its counterpart either in the Old Testament or in the rabbinical writings.

Islam has borrowed both from Judaism and Christianity. Its emphasis upon one God is a central doctrine of Judaism and Christianity. Until his break with the Jews Mohammed led his followers to pray toward Jerusalem, sacred to both Jews and Christians. The black stone of the Kaaba which the Mohammedan kisses on his pilgrimage to Mecca is probably a meteorite once worshiped by the ancient Semites long before the time of Mohammed.

The foregoing illustrations of the composite character of several religions could be greatly multiplied and applied to every religion. The

evidence shows clearly how foolish it is for any religion to claim exclusive possession of the truth.

II

How often we are needlessly divided by words and names when, underneath, the life and spirit which words and names only poorly describe are the same! A liberal rabbi whom I knew quite well once told me of listening to an address by one of his friends who was a Methodist minister. The minister was speaking upon the topic, "What It Means to Be a Christian." Said the rabbi, "I thought it was a wonderful address. It described in clear and compelling fashion the kind of character the world needs. At our Jewish service on next Friday evening I decided that I must share many of these fine ideas and illustrations with my people. I guess I used the major portion of my friend's address on 'What It Means to Be a Christian.' All I did was to change the title to 'What It Means to Be a Jew.'" Surely no one who has had the experience of close fellowship with those of different religious faith can escape the feeling that beneath the names which divide them is a spirit in which they can and ought to be united.

Several years ago I was attending a district meeting of the Rotary Club. The speaker of the evening was waxing eloquent about the spirit of Rotary, as, of course, he should have done. He told an interesting story about Mrs. Lawes, wife of Warden Lawes of Sing Sing Prison. He said that Mrs. Lawes had lived a somewhat empty life until one day, after listening to a Rotary speaker, there flashed upon her mind the glorious possibilities of a life of service. The next day, aflame with the spirit of Rotary, she went to the prison where her husband was warden and started to make the acquaintance of the prisoners. Before many days elapsed she was talking at length to them, listening to their problems, offering sympathy, writing letters for them, befriending them in many ways, so that they looked forward eagerly to her coming.

This labor of love continued for some years. Then gloom descended over the prisoners as they learned that Mrs. Lawes had been killed in an accident. Through a spokesman they made request to attend her funeral in a little white church about a mile away. The request was granted. On the day of the funeral one of the gates of the prison swung open and a long line of men—unguarded—marched silently to the little church. After the service many walked down the aisle, bent over the casket, and kissed the hands which had served them so well. The men marched back again—unguarded—the prison gate swung open, the men marched in, and

the gate closed. All this happened, the speaker emphasized, because Mrs. Lawes had caught the spirit of Rotary. Or was it the spirit of Christ? Could not any Christian minister use this story as an illustration of the meaning of Christian service? Are two different names used here for one deeper reality—the spirit which loves and serves?

The Rotary speaker concluded with a final burst of eloquence. Pointing skyward he spoke of the time when each of us should go to meet the Master Rotarian in the skies. That was news—God is a Rotarian. But maybe it wasn't news to God. Perhaps he had been called that before. Probably he smiled as he remembered others who called him by different names: Kiwanians, Lions, Elks, Masons. He recalled that Moses called him Yahweh, English-speaking people call him God or the Lord, the Mohammedan calls him *Allah*, the German, *Gott*, the French, *Dieu*.

Spirit will always be more important than the creed which seeks to describe it. When our division was sent to the California coast to do amphibious training, late one evening I was walking along the deck of a large army transport chatting with a Jewish medical officer. On his own initiative he started to talk about religion. He had just read Sholem Asch's book, *The Nazarene*. "You know," he said, "I admire the man whom that book describes more than any other man of whom I know. And I have tried to put into my life some of the principles he taught. But sometimes I'm puzzled. As I look around me I find persons who call themselves Christian who, it seems to me, deny the principles this man taught. I wonder sometimes, if I am not more Christian than they are, even if I am a Jew." And I wonder too.

Spirit is ever more important than the form of its expression. During our occupation of Japan I shall never forget the experience which we American soldiers had in worshiping together with Japanese Christians. We sang Christian hymns. The tune was the same for both of us, but the words were different. We recited together the Lord's prayer. Again the rhythm of the words was alike but the words themselves were different. If we didn't understand one another, none of us doubted that God understood both of us. We shared in the observance of Holy Communion. Despite our racial differences, despite the fact that only a few weeks before we had been enemies, despite the barrier of language, we felt a unity of spirit too deep to describe, indeed, impossible to put into words which both could understand.

On the California coast I shared a chapel building with a splendid Jewish chaplain. We got along famously. Whenever I could, I encour-

aged the Jewish boys in our regiment to make his acquaintance and attend his services. He was just as co-operative in sending Protestant lads to me. When Christmas came he helped me procure a Christmas tree and other decorations for our Protestant Christmas services. He also invited me and another Protestant chaplain to share with him in the observance of the Jewish feast of Hanukkah which occurs about Christmas time. I attended a special supper prepared for the Jewish soldiers and then assisted in passing out gifts. Again, I could not escape the feeling that despite our differences in creed and forms of expression we, Protestant and Jew, were one in spirit.

Baptism is an important ceremony of the Christian church, but it is less important than the spiritual experience for which it stands. Paul gives the ceremony its proper place when he says in First Corinthians that he remembers the names of only a few persons in the church whom he baptized and he is not sure whether he baptized others. "For," he writes, "Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the good news."

Just before our regiment was ordered to take the German city of Siegburg there came to me a young man of Lutheran background who wished to be baptized in token of his profession of Christian faith. Now Baptists, of which I am one, believe that the true form of baptism is immersion. Should I insist that this young man be immersed? Difficulties presented themselves. There were no facilities for immersion. There were no nearby churches with baptismal pools. The Sieg River lay before us, but it was covered by the guns of the Germans. Moreover the young man did not want to be immersed. Lutherans baptize by affusion.

It did not take me too long to decide that a profession of Christian faith is far more important than the particular manner in which it is made. In a little grove of trees high above the Sieg River the young man knelt while I placed on his head a few drops of water from a chalice and gave the baptismal formula, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Tears were in his eyes. An air of deep reverence pervaded the group of soldiers gathered there. A second lieutenant approached me and said, "Chaplain, that was a beautiful service." Less than forty-eight hours later my assistant and I lifted his lifeless form from a high knoll in the battle-scarred city of Siegburg.

Under the circumstances, how foolish it would have been to insist that a man profess his Christian faith in just the way I thought was right, to make the form more important than the spiritual experience it expressed. And today who would be so foolish as to assert that Baptists and Disciples

who practice immersion are any better Christians than Methodists and Episcopalians who practice affusion, or than members of the Salvation Army and Quakers, neither of whom observe any form of baptism?

III

In a world where men are often needlessly divided by names, creeds and ceremonies, what shall be the role of religion? This is a difficult question. We must guard ourselves against easy answers. One easy answer is that since there is such a multiplicity of creeds and ceremonies, confusing and seemingly irreconcilable, and since spirit and life are what count after all, let's forget about religion. All we need is a code of ethics, something like the Golden Rule—"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

That has a very plausible sound but only a little reflection shows its inadequacy. Faced with danger and death, one wants something more. As I read the Scripture and offered prayer to men in the foxholes, I felt almost as if I were giving them a drink of water. No recitation of the Golden Rule would have satisfied men in a situation like that. They craved an assurance that somehow, come what may, they were in the hands of a wise and loving God. Only that could satisfy them. They wanted what enabled a friend of mine to survive an extremely critical operation. He told me that as he was delivered to the operating room, there came to his mind a line from the twenty-third Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." "I just relaxed," he said, "and put myself in the hands of God." There is no doubt in my mind that his calm faith was a vital factor in saving his life.

There comes a time in every man's life when he needs to feel that God is with him, and then no clever philosophy or code of ethics will satisfy. The Golden Rule, for instance, is a helpful guide but a man cannot pray to the Golden Rule. And even the Golden Rule does not stand alone. It requires a standard beyond itself. How it operates depends upon where you are. Among the head hunters of primitive cultures the Golden Rule would mean no more than "I'll hunt your head as I expect you to hunt mine." Among more civilized folk it may mean, "I'll gouge you on the black market as I expect you to gouge me," or "I'll vote for your measure in Congress as I expect you to vote for mine," no matter whether either measure is wise or just.

Of course, strictly interpreted, the Golden Rule would require us to

treat others even better than we expect to be treated, for it admonishes us to treat them as we would *wish* to be treated. But even what we would wish for others depends upon the degree of our intellectual and spiritual development. What the primitive man with the best of intentions might wish for another primitive man could be something we would consider horrible today. For instance, among some of the Fijian tribes in times past it was the custom, when one's parents began to grow old, to kill them, perhaps by making them climb high trees and shaking them down. This practice was based upon the belief that one entered the next life with the same physical powers one had in this life. Therefore, it was a kindness to kill one's relatives before their physical powers disintegrated so far that they would be compelled to go through eternity physically handicapped. Among the Fijians who held to this belief, the Golden Rule would certainly mean, "I'll kill my parents before they become senile, as I hope my children will do to me." In another article¹ I have endeavored to show that apart from the life and other teaching of Jesus, the Golden Rule may mean very little.

A second easy answer regarding the role of religion in one world suggests that all religions should unite under one name. But history and sacred memories cluster around names, and people are loath to give them up. Their tenacity in holding on to names is sometimes quite amusing. For instance, a large Protestant church of the South is known as the Walnut Street Church. Early in its history this church used to be located on Walnut Street, but for years now, much to the confusion of the traveler, it has been situated on St. Catherine Street. Give up the name Walnut Street? Never!

Will Catholics change their name to Protestants, or Protestants to Catholics? Will Jews all become Christians? Will Moslems merge with Hindus, and both finally acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Savior? Will each give up his distinctive name, embodying as it does centuries of sacred memories and traditions? Should they do this if they would?

At this point students of religion differ. Edmund D. Soper, for instance, sees in Christianity the final religion which the whole world needs.² Born on the mission field in Japan, teacher, author and life-time student of religions, Dr. Soper has written a book which deserves careful study by all those interested in the philosophy of the Christian World Mission.

¹ Settle, E. T., "The Golden Rule Is Not Enough." *These Times*, Vol. 62, July 1953, pp. 8ff.

² Soper, E. D., *The Philosophy of the Christian World Mission*. The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943.

While recognizing certain values in each of the other religions, he feels that Christianity possesses all of these values and more—in some instances very much more.

Peter A. Bertocci³ disagrees with those who would limit God's revelation of himself to Jesus or the Bible. There is nothing revolutionary about this point of view. In 1928 the International Missionary Conference held at Jerusalem declared: "We welcome every noble quality in non-Christian persons or systems as further proof that the Father, who sent his Son into the world, has nowhere left himself without witness." It is theoretically possible, says Bertocci, that a given tradition may have reached the zenith of religious insight. "But no human being could ever know this. And all who assert it without carefully understanding the religious experience and thought of others and the formulations of that experience and thought in doctrine, in worship, and in action, are less than fair to their fellowmen."⁴

John Baillie,⁵ commenting upon Peter's claim (Acts 4:12) that only in Jesus Christ is salvation to be found, says that Peter's words are to be taken not as theological dogma but rather as a statement of personal experience. What Peter meant was simply that no other religion had been able to loose him from his sins and give him peace and joy so effectively as the religion of Jesus. Baillie believes that Peter's estimate of Christianity holds for the world today. But he is well aware of the spiritual values in other religions besides Christianity.

Frank Laubach, the apostle of literacy, notes that Gandhi, the great Hindu leader, was strongly influenced by the Christian missionary, C. F. Andrews. From Andrews, Gandhi received Christ's spirit of compassion and love for the multitude. Gandhi introduced the spirit of compassion into Hinduism, but he, himself, never took the name Christian. Laubach feels that Gandhi was wise in remaining a Hindu in name if not altogether in spirit. Says Laubach:⁶

I think Gandhi deliberately chose to remain a Hindu and inject Christ into Hinduism. He found in the Bhagavad Gita a very fine courtesy between nobly born people, but he could find no compassion for the multitude. This he found first in C. F. Andrews, that saint who spent his life travelling from one oppressed area to another, suffering with the oppressed and doing all he could to help them. . . . Gandhi has put a new definition into saintliness. He has made it synonymous with

³ Bertocci, P. A., *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951.

⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 509.

⁵ Baillie, J., *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.

⁶ Laubach, F., *World Literacy News Letter*, Vol. VII, No. 2, February, 1953. (Committee on World Literacy and Christian Literature, Division of Foreign Missions, National Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City.)

Christlike compassion. This, I think, was deliberate on Gandhi's part. I think he believed he would do India more good that way.

The Christians fear this new syncretism. They say that Hinduism is stealing the message of Christianity and so is trying to undermine Christianity. The question is not whether to like it or dislike it. Like it or not, it is a fact; we cannot change it.

The question is whether the Christian church should become the enemy of Gandhi or praise him for the good he did. My own opinion is that we should remain his friend. "He that is not against me is for me," said Jesus. And Gandhi was for Jesus.

Laubach also writes, "We westerners hide smugly behind the word 'Christian,' making it often a cloak for our selfishness. . . . While working at Rajkot we all felt the spirit of Gandhi very close to us. I found myself overflowing with thanks for this great man, who was so far, far above most of us who profess to be Christian."⁷

T. R. Glover in his *Jesus of History* told us that Christianity supplanted the so-called pagan religions of Greece and Rome because the Christians "out-thought," "out-lived," and "out-died" the pagans. If Christianity should supplant the religions with which it competes today, it will be for no less compelling reasons.

IV

Toward the end of his stimulating book, *Living Religions and a World Faith*, W. E. Hocking asserts the need for religious unity. There is need, further, for a common, universal religious symbol. Christ, representing best of all religions God's care for individual men, is in Hocking's judgment the symbol most appropriate. But he makes this proposal cautiously and in the spirit of humility. Thus he says:

No symbol can be an obligatory symbol. The figure of Christ can never serve the cause of world faith as the perquisite of a favored group, still less as an escape from induced fears. "Accept this sign or perish" is an attitude which now incites rejection, because the spirit of man has become too much informed by Christianity. As a privilege, the Christ symbol "will draw all men"; as a threat, never. But as the meaning of this symbol becomes purified of partisanship and folly, rejection becomes arbitrary, its temper will pass, and the perfect interpretation of the human heart will assume its due place. When "In hoc signo" ceases to be a battle cry, it will ascend as token of another conquest, the conquest of estrangement among the seekers of God.⁸

Floyd Ross does not expect any large numbers of non-Christian faiths to change their names to Christian. Nor does he favor any aggressive attempt to bring about such a change. "Just as we must let a child BE

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Hocking, W. E., *Living Religions and a World Faith*. The Macmillan Company, 1940, p. 269.

a child in order that he may move through childhood to true maturity, so we must be willing to let persons be 'Christians,' 'Buddhists,' 'atheists,' 'theists,' 'Moslems,' 'Sikhs,' with the hope that each will grow toward an ever larger spiritual maturity."⁹ And he quotes from the *Tao Teh King*:

The world is a divine vessel:
It cannot be shaped;
Nor can it be insisted upon.
He who shapes it, damages;
He who insists upon it loses it.

Surely Dr. Ross does not mean that we should cease all efforts to change the ideas of men. Had he believed that, he would not have taken the trouble to write his interesting article. Surely he believes in the vast enterprise of education and, possibly, in some forms of evangelism. What I think he means is that those who set out to change the ideas of men should proceed without coercion and in the spirit of humility, ever conscious that maybe their ideas, too, need to be changed.

Try as we may, we cannot separate ourselves from the limitations of our own knowledge and experience. When a man announces with an air of finality that he takes his stand upon the Bible, what his stand is depends upon how well informed he is. Is the Bible for him a mystic revelation dictated word for word by God to man, or has he taken the trouble to study how, where, why, when, and by whom its books were written? Has he compared any of the stories and ideas contained in the Bible, sacred to him, with stories and ideas in books sacred to other religions? Has he wrestled with the opinions of equally sincere scholars whose lifetime of study has brought them to differing conclusions about some aspects of the Bible? The man who has endeavored to do these things seldom speaks about the Bible with an air of dogmatic finality.

Equally foolish, thinks Dr. Ross, is the attempt to devise another supposedly universal religion. He writes, "Every religion presumes in some sense to be universal, but it ends up by becoming parochial and sectarian if the leaders are not universal men. Not even the Roman Catholic Church is truly catholic, for it excludes more by its dogmas and definitions than it includes. The same is true of the Bahai faith and other more recent efforts." Whatever religious synthesis is achieved, he believes, must come about by the gradual interaction of religions one with another, not by self-conscious eclecticism.

At this point one recalls the attempts to establish a universal language.

⁹ Ross, F., "Christian Attitudes Toward Other Faiths." *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol. XXI, April, 1953, p. 82f.

The circle in which Esperanto is used is small indeed; this artificial language has not succeeded in becoming universal. Meanwhile it is probably true that English, a language rooted in real life, is spoken in nearly every part of the world. Its spread has been gradual and, in the main, without coercion. One sure way to curtail its use would be to try to compel people to use it or to insist boastfully that it is the best of all languages. Now, it could be that Christianity will become as universal or more so than the English language. But in this era of intense racial and national pride, its spread will have to be as gradual and as natural as that of our language.

Science has so telescoped world distances that today even the most remote countries form part of one neighborhood. It is the high function of religion to turn this neighborhood into a brotherhood. Here is a missionary task which should challenge all there is in us. Religion should reconcile men to God and to each other. We have no right to expect a man to listen to the truth which we are sure we possess unless we are willing to listen to the truth which he is sure he possesses. At present, religion needlessly divides men and nations. This is both shameful and tragic. Religion, if it means anything, should bring men together. It should be a most powerful aid instead of an obstacle to world peace. Perhaps we need worry less about turning Moslems and Buddhists into Christians than about convincing the growing numbers of secularly minded in all lands that there is a God of Truth and Love whom we ignore at our peril, and through whose worship alone we can find lasting peace and joy.

V

To seek complete uniformity in our religious ceremonies would probably be as hopeless as to get all religions to unite under one name. Human beings differ as blades of grass, and what ministers to the needs of one may not help another. People in churches where little emphasis is given to liturgy are accustomed to extemporaneous prayers. The most beautiful prayer in the world when read from a book is apt to leave them cold. On the other hand, people who are accustomed to their particular prayer book build up certain spiritual experiences around it, and lacking the prayers of their book, they feel that something is missing. A Baptist minister and friend of mine was asked to call upon a young lady in a hospital. She was a stranger to him. After a brief conversation, in typical Baptist fashion he offered an extempore prayer for her recovery. He could see that she was not quite satisfied. He discovered that she was an Episcopalian. Being a resourceful minister he had with him a copy of the Epis-

copal Prayer Book. He opened this and read the prayer for the sick. Apparently that was what she wanted.

There is no necessary conflict between loyalty to one's own religion and appreciation of fundamental values in all religions. The man who is a patriotic citizen of his own country is a better citizen of the world than is a man without a country. So it is with religion. The man who ignorantly asserts that it doesn't make any difference what you believe so long as you thoroughly believe it, usually believes nothing. The man who blandly asserts he can worship just as well in one place as in another place seldom worships in any place.

Let a man, then, be loyal to his own religious faith. Let him proclaim that faith because he ought to share with his fellows what he has found to be good. And in word and deed let him be humble and loving—humble, because neither he nor any other man possesses all of the truth; loving, because whenever he denies the spirit of love he denies God who is love. Some years ago Dr. Oscar Maurer, wise and kindly pastor of Center Congregational Church, New Haven, Connecticut, told this story to an interfaith group. He said that a farmer enlisted the aid of some friends in searching for his small daughter who was lost. Despite her tender years and the fact that she was quite ill, somehow she had managed to leave her home and wander away in the tall weeds and grass which stretched away for some distance from the farmhouse. During several hours the farmer and his friends searched fruitlessly, the farmer growing ever more anxious as it commenced to get darker and colder. Then, one of the searchers came forward with a suggestion. "The grass and weeds are quite thick," he said. "It is easy for us to miss many places and go over other places several times. I suggest that all of us join hands, mark our starting place and go through the undergrowth somewhat like a large rake. Then we'll be sure not to skip any place."

All agreed it was a good idea and they started out with joined hands. In less than half an hour they came upon the little girl. But, alas, it was too late. She was dead. Then the farmer lifted up his voice in an anguished cry, "In God's name, why didn't we join hands before?" Need we state the moral? The child of civilization is very sick. It has wandered away from God, its Father. Many of us, representing many different religious faiths, are out seeking ways to bring the world back to the Father; but going our separate ways we shall never be successful. Isn't it about time we joined hands—not necessarily in name or creed or ceremony or organization, but in the spirit of love for God and man?

Christ's Call to Unity and Mission

EUGENE L. SMITH

THE WIDE USE of the word "ecumenical" today is doubly surprising. The first surprise is that "ecumenical" should be so much used today; the second surprise is that it should be so misused. One often hears responsible church leaders refer to the "ecumenical movement" as though it were only the movement toward church unity. Persons refer to the "ecumenical movement" and the "missionary movement" as though they were two different things! This is a gross misunderstanding of the meaning of the word. It comes from the Greek word for "the whole inhabited earth," and is properly used to describe everything that relates to the whole task of the whole church in bringing the whole gospel to the whole world. It covers, therefore, equally the missionary movement and the movement toward unity. The missionary agencies of the Christian church are not only vitally a part of the ecumenical movement but in many instances have been its very spearheads.

The inseparable interrelatedness between this call to unity and the call to mission is becoming more and more apparent. There apparently has never been a conference on missions that talked as much about unity as the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council in 1952, and there probably has never been a conference on unity that talked as much about missions as the Lund Conference of the Commission on Faith and Order in 1952.

My purpose here is, first, to deal with this oneness between the call of Christ to achieve our unity in him, and the call of Christ to fulfill our mission in this world. Following that, I will try to suggest the implications of that interrelatedness for the World Council of Churches, and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Lastly, we will consider the implications of this interrelatedness for individual Christians.

In John 17 is recorded a prayer of Christ's:

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I do not pray for these only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me.¹

Our calling to unity is clear. It is Christ's expressed desire that those who believe on his name should be one, that we should be perfectly one, that we should be one as God the Father and Christ the Son are one. As the call to unity in this prayer is clear, so is the relationship between the call to unity and the call to mission expressed with complete clarity. In that relationship between the call to unity and the call to mission we see three important factors related to the call to unity.

I

In this interrelatedness we see, first, the nature of the unity to which we are called. There is, of course, a certain sense in which unity in the body of Christ is not instrumental but an end in itself. That sense is the fact that the unity of the body in Christ is a reflection of the unity within the Trinity. Yet it is also true that even the unity found in utter adoration, in complete worship, can remain pure unity only as it finds outlet in Christian witness. It is also true that all that man knows of the Trinity is what he learns of the Trinity in the action of redemption—God the Father, our Creator, sending his Son that whosoever believeth on him might be saved, and sending also his Holy Spirit, to live with us in witness to Jesus Christ for our redemption. The unity of the Godhead, as we are able to understand it, is the dynamic unity of redemptive action.

So Christ prays, "May they all be one; . . . so that the world may believe." This is not the static unity which legislation can describe, but the dynamic unity of Christians discovering again every day their unity in Christ as they reach out in witness unto him. This is not the unity of the monolith but the unity of the common yoke. This is not the unity of the completed structure but the unity of the road where Christ leads us in search for the lost sheep. The body does not exist for the sake of health but health for the sake of the body. The unity of the body of Christ exists in order that the whole body may fulfill the purpose of redemption for which its Creator called it into being.

¹ John 17:20-23, R.S.V.

II

The interrelatedness between the call to unity and the call to mission shows us thus, at least in part, the nature of the unity to which we are called. It shows us, in the second place, the urgency of the call to that unity. It is, of course, obvious that the call to unity often has been so interpreted as to weaken Christian witness. It is also true, and there are countless instances of this today, that the call to mission has been so interpreted as to weaken tragically the unity among Christians. This apparent conflict, however, between the call to unity and the call to mission exists only because of man's misinterpretation. It is not a part of the divine call itself. The fact is that since the days of the New Testament the love of the brethren for each other has been the most powerful witness for drawing persons unto Jesus Christ and the disunity among Christians has been one of the most tragic handicaps to effective evangelization of this world.

When Dr. B. R. Ambedkar announced that he intended to lead the sixty million untouchables of India out of the Hindu fold, Dr. Azariah, Bishop of Dornakal, was the chairman of the National Christian Council of India. He went to Dr. Ambedkar for a private conference. In that conference he commented that Dr. Ambedkar's statement was largely negative, stating that from which he wished to lead his people but not that to which he wished to lead them, and described the dangers of a movement which has primarily a negative motivation. Dr. Ambedkar commented that he supposed the Bishop of Dornakal was suggesting that he lead his people into the Christian fold. He went on to say that he recognized what Christianity had done for the untouchables of India, that it had been probably the most powerful single force for their uplift, but he was not going to lead his people into the Christian church, for the reason that his followers at that time were unified but if they were taken into the Christian fold they would be divided among differing denominations and would lose the unity that they then had.

Now it was simply not true that his followers were then united, for they were divided among many castes—but that was what he said.

The Bishop of Dornakal commented later that never in his long ministry had he felt such a deep and burning sense of humiliation for the divisions in the Christian church. Mr. James Mathews of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church visited Dr. Ambedkar in 1946, when he was Minister of Labor in the Interim Government. Flanking his office were two identical waiting rooms, except that over the mantel in one

was a picture of Buddha and over the mantel in the other was a picture of Christ. Dr. Ambedkar's office was between the two waiting rooms. When Mr. Mathews entered, he saw over Dr. Ambedkar's desk a print of the picture of Christ before Pilate. In the conversation, Mr. Mathews asked Dr. Ambedkar if he were not then in the position of Pilate, deciding what he would do with Christ. Dr. Ambedkar said, "Yes, I suppose I am." Four years later Mr. Mathews visited Dr. Ambedkar again, then Minister of Law in the government of India. This visit was made one month after Dr. Ambedkar had decided for Buddha instead of for Christ.

It would, of course, be naïve to assume that the divisions within the Christian church were the only factor affecting Dr. Ambedkar's decision. It seems perfectly clear that there were powerful political motivations in his actions. However, we are not responsible for the motivations of Dr. Ambedkar. We are responsible for the fact that at a time of decision for many thousands, and perhaps millions of people, the disunity of the Christian church was a barrier between those people and the Christ whom they so desperately need to know.

Two years after his conference with Dr. Ambedkar, the Bishop of Dornakal was at the Edinburgh Conference on Faith and Order. He listened to the long discussion of unity from which no vigorous movement toward unity seemed to be developing, finally rose and said, "To the older churches of the West, Christian unity may be a matter of secondary importance, but to the younger churches of the mission fields Christian unity is literally a matter of life and death." The distinction which the Bishop drew between the older and the younger churches lessens with every year, for more and more we realize that every nation upon earth is a mission field. Likewise we are realizing with increasing vividness that for the church in every nation of the world, unity is literally a matter of life and death.

History is studded with such illustrations. There is in India a community called the Ezhava community, numbering about 800,000 souls. About twenty years ago the leaders of that movement, knowing little of Christianity but seeing what it had done for people of certain situations, decided they would lead their people into the Christian church. It is reported, and I think reliably, that a Hindu politician hearing of that decision went to talk with them. He said that he heard they were going to lead their people into the Christian church and asked which church they would choose. They were startled to know that there is not one Christian church but many, and fearing to lose the unity that did exist within their

community, did not seek to make their people Christians. History adds to that record the significant footnote of a recent report on how many members of that community in India today are members of the Communist party.

As one reads the reports of the Lund Conference on Faith and Order, one has a feeling that therein the disunity of the church is presented almost in the light of respectability. Perhaps there is a respectability about our disunity if we approach the question in terms of the past, if we think that we are justified according to our origins, if our primary concern is to explain to each other why we are what we are. Whenever, however, we confront squarely and honestly the desperate hunger of people in this suffering world for a clear word about Jesus Christ, then we see our disunity not as a matter of respectability but as a measure of our sin of disobedience to Christ. As Paul tells us in the letter to the Ephesians, it is "with all the saints" that we are able to comprehend the "breadth and length and depth and height" of God's love to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Only with all the saints are we able to make clear witness to this world of the breadth and length and depth and height of God's love.

III

In the interrelatedness between the call to unity and the call to mission we see the nature of the unity to which we are called. We see, in the second place, the urgency of that call—and, in the third place, the pathway to that unity.

Here I take again an illustration from the work of Bishop Azariah of Dornakal. In the long years in preparation for the establishment of the Church of South India, he saw clearly that if there was to be a true unity among the people of the church they could find it only as they experience that unity in common Christian outreach. Therefore he invited the three churches in the area where he worked to join each year in a Week of Witness. This Week of Witness was developed until it included activities for every person in every church. There were parades and dramas and songs and the distribution of literature and special services for the old and special services for the young. Particular attention was given to the opportunities which each Christian has at work and at play, to say a word for Christ to employers or employees, to friends, to neighbors, to strangers. In the increasing momentum of this Week of Witness, the three churches together invaded literally hundreds of hitherto untouched villages in the name of Christ. When the unity thus experienced

in mission was signalized by the formal act of legislation, this Week of Witness had come to mean so much to the people of the Telugu area that it continues to be one of the high points of their Christian year.

This is a lesson important for us to learn in America. There is a widespread interest in church unity among us, yet the discussion of unity carries with it vivid danger. One of those dangers is the apparently widespread assumption that the way to find Christian unity is to discover the least common denominator of belief and make that the foundation for a united church. Such a faith would be so flat that upon it no man could find foothold. Every Christian has a sacred stewardship for the values in the denomination that led him to Jesus Christ. Every Christian is responsible for doing all that he can to preserve and to share the glories of his denominational tradition. We need to ask, however, what those glories truly are and how they are preserved and shared.

The glory in any denominational tradition is found exactly in the degree of obedience which that tradition represents as it was performed in a particular historical situation. By that very token therefore, the lasting value in a tradition can be preserved and shared only by a similar act of equally complete obedience in the present and different historical situation. We can understand how to preserve and share the glories of any denominational tradition only as we remember clearly that God's truth is never propositional but personal. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth." Our devotion belongs not to any creed but to the Christ. Within the New Testament there are widely differing theologies but a common dynamic devotion unto the Christ in whom men saw the face of God.

The splendor of denominational tradition is not shared in the process of negotiation. It is not made vivid to others by saying, "You keep this and I'll keep that, you give up this and I'll give up that." Rather it is preserved and shared in its fullness as Christians live together in common witness unto him who is the Savior of us all. So we have the testimony of the Church in South India that in the vitally important process of understanding, appreciating and appropriating the various traditions brought into that union, they made more significant progress in the five years of their living together than they did in the twenty-five of their negotiating together. Is not all this only a footnote to the words of Christ, "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."²

² John 12:24, Revised Standard Version.

The implications of this interrelatedness of the calling to mission and to unity are vividly clear as we consider the life of the World Council of Churches and of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America or of any council of churches anywhere. The implication is simply this: either such a council becomes an agency of witness, of evangelism, that is, of the Christian mission in its fullest sense, or that agency dies and should die. If any council of churches becomes primarily preoccupied with its own machinery, or essentially concerned with its own perpetuation and extension of its power, then that organization becomes a liability to the Christian cause. It is eternally true for councils of churches as it is for individuals that they find their lives only as they lose them in obedience to the command of Christ to make disciples of all nations.

This implication is equally clear for the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches to be held at Evanston. If that Evanston assembly is to mean anything to the man in the pew, if it is to serve the will of God for this hour, if it is to stimulate our churches to meet the anguished needs of suffering mankind today, it will only be as that assembly issues a clarion call to Christians to intensify and extend their Christian witness in every highway and byway of every land upon earth. If the Evanston assembly is to lead Christians into a deeper unity with each other, it will do so only as it leads them on to an intensified Christian witness.

We confront, however, a real danger that the Evanston Conference may miss this challenge in neglect of the vital interrelationship between the call to mission and to unity. The report of the Commission on the Theme of the Assembly, which at the time of this writing is now in its second published draft, deals with our Christian hope. There are sections of that report where one has a feeling of clear, incisive, and creative thinking. However, when the report comes to deal with the statement of the relationship between that hope and our mission, one has the feeling that here are several paragraphs tacked on to the end of the report almost as an afterthought. What a tragedy it will be if a conference like that at Evanston issues a message of hope to the world without making incisively and vividly clear the relationship between the hope that we have in our risen Lord *for* our world and the mission to which our Lord calls us *in* this world.

The present form of the report of the Commission on Evangelism seems to be shaped primarily in terms of the Western world. There are

peripheral references to the rest of mankind but the main direction of that report seems so pointed in terms of a post-Christian world as to miss some of the most urgent implications of our task of evangelism in this world which is in its entirety a pre-Christian world.

Further, is it possible for the Commission on Faith and Order to fulfill its high task in this hour unless it deals centrally with the relationship of the church's visible unity to the church's mission in a world facing deadly peril from its own disunity?

The implication of all this for the individual Christian is simply in the fact that we are living under judgment. St. Paul wrote to the Philippians, "It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ. . . ."³ These are terrible words, terrible because they describe a condition so different from ours. In all this question of Christian unity here is the central issue: does your love abound more and more? Do you now love your Christian brothers more fully, more vividly than you did a year ago? If love does not grow from more to more, then we only intensify our disobedience unto Christ.

With that love we need "knowledge and all discernment." Christian unity is not achieved merely through generalized good will or pleasant and friendly impulses. It calls for all the knowledge that the best trained can bring, and for the sharpest discernment that the wise can offer. These we need in facing the incredibly complex, difficult and important problems which must be faced in obedience to the call to Christian unity. But it is only as we continually grow in love and marshal every resource to implement that growth, that we truly do approve what is excellent and only thus do we approach being pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

About three years after the formation of the Church of South India a friend asked one of its leaders how the union was working out. This leader responded that they in the church do not ask each other how the union is working out. "We met for years in negotiation asking whether this or that would work and we made but little progress. Then we changed our focus and met together asking not whether one plan or another would work but asking what was the will of God. When that came to be our central question we began to make real progress in unity together."

Here, too, is a vividly important lesson for us in America. We are a pragmatic people. The god of success has a prominent place in our

³ Phil. 1:9, 10, R.S.V.

pantheon. We are exceedingly prone to approach all questions of church life under the theme, "Will it work?" Little do we remember that when we put up the pragmatic test as the final test, when we make the question of success the ultimate question, we deny the whole meaning of the cross in the life of every Christian and every organization.

IV

When we really focus on the discovery of God's will for us in this matter, then we find a path down which we can move. Obedience is the uniquely Christian method of knowing. It is as we obey that we learn. It is sometimes said that we should define what we mean by church unity before we try to discuss it, in order that we may avoid errors in semantics and sharply delimit the issues which we confront. There is in that claim a strange kind of arrogance. Who is able to say what God's ultimate will is for us in the pattern of our unity? Who is able thus to read the future? The Scripture tells us that God's word is "a light unto our feet and a lamp unto our pathway." It is not a floodlight that outlines our ultimate goal clearly against the sky to be seen by all, but a light before our feet and a lamp unto our pathway. It shows us always where the next step lies and when we take that step we see where the step is that follows. As we obey we learn. "If any man's will is to do His will, he shall know."

The path to true unity is simply the path of obeying today the opportunities for Christian witness which God puts before us today; and when thus today we obey, we shall know tomorrow what our next step shall be. Thus the future is in the hands of the Holy Spirit, and in following him we find indeed that our love abounds more and more with knowledge and all discernment so that we are able to approve what is excellent and move toward being pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

It is our tragedy that this day of Christ is so unreal in much of our thinking. We do not really sense that we live under judgment. We show almost none of the urgency of those who vividly know that this day, any day, may be the day of His coming and complete triumph.

One of the most effective pieces of Christian witness being done today is that by the McCall Mission in France, working among the laboring people who are either overwhelmingly indifferent or antagonistic to Christ and his church. There was a long, bitter strike on the docks in Marseilles. The families of the workers suffered intensely from hunger. A group of people came from the community asking the leadership of the McCall Mission in that city if they would try to feed the families,

This request posed a very serious problem for the Mission. Included in the Mission were people not only from labor but also from management, and in France the gap between labor and management is much more deep and wide than in the United States. They met for prayer. They read again the Scripture telling of the feeding of the five thousand. They remembered how the disciples, confronted with a hungry crowd, wanted to send the crowd away, but Jesus told them to feed the crowd as they could, even though they had only a few loaves and fishes. In obedience to that guidance they decided they should try to feed the families of the strikers.

Mr. G. R. Velten, a minister of the Reformed Church of France, in telling of the event, said that the first miracle that occurred was that the Mission was not split by this decision, and the second miracle was the way in which the loaves and fishes were multiplied again. They found to their amazement that people of many different sections of the city were willing to contribute food to feed the strikers' families so that they gave 70,000 meals in four weeks' time to the families of 5,000 workers for a cost of only 5 cents per meal.

One day a group of about thirty were unloading sacks of potatoes. One slipped on the floor of the kitchen and fell under his load. He swore and said, "Mr. Velten, this business has been going on long enough. Our kitchen is dirty. We don't have the steel brushes we need to clean it, but I've got a friend who could get into the shipyard and pick up half a dozen steel brushes and we could get a clean kitchen then."

Mr. Velten protested that he could not agree to stealing the brushes. The others said that it wasn't really stealing at all because everybody did it, and often that was the only way they could get the things that they needed. Mr. Velten, needless to say, was deeply puzzled; but he did remember that most of that group were Communists, and since they were Communists they did have an eschatology. This is, by the way, more than we can say of many Christians. Too little do we realize the tremendous advantage of communism in our time in that the Communists do have the advantage of a clear eschatology while many Christians have forgotten theirs.

So Mr. Velten asked the group, "You hope for a new world to come in our world, don't you? You believe that there will be a new economy and that in that economy there will be peace and security. You believe that in this new economy there will be no strikes and no hunger."

"Of course we believe that."

There was no discussion about this, as being Communists they knew the Communist philosophy of history. Mr. Velten went on, "I also believe in a new day that is coming. I also believe that there will be a new society and that in this society there will be no hunger, no strikes, no injustice. I believe in a new order which will give opportunity for all and peace to all. I believe that the leader of that new day is the one who sent me here to help feed you, and his name is Jesus Christ."

Mr. Velten told me that to his amazement they did not laugh—but perhaps it was not amazing for, after all, their families were being fed because Christ had sent Mr. Velten to them. Mr. Velten then asked, "Do you think there will be stealing in the new society that you believe in?" "Of course not." Mr. Velten: "In the new society which Jesus Christ is coming to establish there will not be any stealing." After the period of silence which followed, he asked, "What shall we do?"

Those people, so desperately poor that they were hungry, scraped together enough pennies to buy one steel brush. It cost them money. They had only one brush to work with instead of the many they might have stolen, but with one steel brush they cleaned up that kitchen. They lived that day under the judgment of the new society in which they believed, and that day was different because of that judgment.

This will be a different world when we Christians realize that we live under judgment. When that realization is clear there will be an urgency about our obedience strangely lacking now. For at last the judgment by which we shall be judged is essentially this—how much are we one, in order that the world may believe?

The Little Flowers of John Wesley

RICHARD M. CAMERON

I

MORE THAN ONE student of Methodism has pointed out certain striking resemblances between that movement and the Franciscan.¹ That there were great differences between the two movements is obvious. The differences were almost as great as those between the Age of Faith and the Age of Reason, between the age when St. Francis signed the only autograph we have from him with a "Tau," and that when John Wesley could send his writings to the printer under the by-line, "John Wesley, M.A." Perhaps the greatest single difference in the cultural climate was caused by the rise to dominance of middle-class ideals. Money and its acquisition had come to stay. Whereas St. Francis shunned even the touch of money, Wesley said, "Gain all you can." The Methodist mission was not primarily to the middle classes, but the inculcation of middle-class virtues was part of its mission. "Respectability" is a word which often occurs in the writings of the Methodists. Where St. Francis could take off all his clothes in the crowded public square of Assisi to give them back to his father, and his followers could go about, to church and elsewhere, in their drawers only, Wesley urged neatness in dress on his followers. The extravagances of the Franciscan movement were replaced by decorum in Methodism. To be sure, Thomas Olivers could write: "The love I had for Mr. Whitefield was inexpressible. I used to follow him as he walked the streets, and could scarce refrain from kissing the very prints of his feet."² But he did refrain, I am sure.

Still, admitting these differences, and others too, which I will not take time to specify, the writings issuing from the two movements couldn't help striking similar notes. For both were essentially roving apostolates to the poor, conducted by men whose commendation lay not in their ecclesiastical

¹ To give one of many possible examples: O. H. Wakeman, *History of the Church of England*. London: Rivington's, 1927, 11th ed., p. 438, "John Wesley was, in fact, the St. Francis of the eighteenth century."

² *AM II* (1779), 85. (A list of titles abbreviated appears at the end of this article, p. 278.)

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status but in their concern for sinners and in their own poverty. Thomas Hanson described himself and many another Methodist Preacher when he said, "I am but a brown bread Preacher, that seeks to help all I can to heaven in the best manner I can."³

There is a genuine Franciscan ring in more than one of the "Rules of an Assistant" which Wesley drew up for the guidance of lay Preachers at the first Conference. "Holy Obedience" appears in this one: "Act in all things not according to your own will, but be a son in the Gospel. As such it is your part to employ your time in the manner which we direct." In this, "Holy Poverty": "Take no money of any one. If they give you food when you are hungry, or clothes when you need them, it is good. But not silver, or gold. Let there be no pretense to say, we grow rich by the Gospel."⁴

Wesley's reply to the Tax Commissioners who wrote him that he must be holding back returns on his silver plate is well known, but it will bear repeating here: "Sir: I have two silver teaspoons at London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many around me want bread."⁵

Charles Wesley, too, understood the "deceitfulness of riches" and was suspicious of them. In early life he refused a large estate in Ireland. Later he declined the offer of a living of £500 a year to remain among the people he loved, and also a large fortune willed to him by a woman who had quarreled with her family. Charles was urged to accept it and then turn it over to the family, but he rejected that course as a trick of the devil. "It won't do," he said. "I know what I am now, but I do not know what I should be if I were thus made rich."⁶

The autobiographies of the early Preachers are full of notices of their faring forth provided chiefly with their trust in God. Sometimes, though by no means always, they left considerable substance, or at least the hope of it, behind them. John Murlin, for instance, wrote:

At this time the world began to smile on me. . . . Being in so agreeable a situation in the midst of my Christian friends I built me an house that I might fix my tabernacle.

Just then I received a letter from the Rev. John Wesley, enquiring "if I was willing to be a travelling preacher?" So . . . I resolved to give up all for Christ, and

³ *AM* III (1780), 484.

⁴ From the "Bennett Minutes" for Fri., June 29, 1744, published in *Publications of the Methodist Historical Society*, No. 1. London, 1896.

⁵ *WJL* VI, 230.

⁶ *WAW*, p. 353. The compiler of this collection, *Anecdotes of the Wesleys*, was the Rev. J. B. Wakeley, D.D. (d. 1875), an industrious but somewhat pedestrian writer on Methodist "antiquities." Though many of the anecdotes come from trustworthy sources, many others are true "Little Flowers" in the sense that they represent popular impressions about Wesley rather than historic actuality.

accordingly, on October 12, 1754, I took my horse and without delay rode away into the West of Cornwall.⁷

St. Francis' sensitive conscience reproached him as a thief if he took more than he needed in his begging. The same sensitiveness in Thomas Olivers led to similar self-reproach: "While I was at dinner one day at Cullompton, I was dreadfully tempted to believe that I was not called to preach. I then thought, this food does not belong to me; and, therefore I am a thief and a robber in eating it. I then burst into tears and could eat no more."⁸

Perhaps the most authentic echo of the Franciscan spirit, because it not only tells of privation, but also breathes the spirit of gaiety in which it was borne, comes to us from the heartiest of Wesley's Paladins, John Nelson. He and Wesley were on a preaching tour of Cornwall together.

All that time, [Nelson says,] Mr. Wesley and I lay upon the floor: he had my great coat for his pillow, and I had Burkitt's Notes on the New Testament for mine.

After being here near three weeks, one morning, about three o'clock, Mr. Wesley turned over and finding me awake, clapped me on the side, saying, "Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer, I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but one side." We usually preached on the commons, going from one common to another, and it was but seldom any one asked us to eat or drink.

One day we had been at St. Hilary Downs, and Mr. Wesley had preached from Ezekiel's vision of dry bones, and there was a shaking among the people as he preached. And as he returned, Mr. Wesley stopped his horse to pick the blackberries, saying, "Brother Nelson, we ought to be thankful there is plenty of blackberries: for this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst that I ever saw for getting food."⁹

II

The *Little Flowers of St. Francis* are, as is well known, a late compilation, being made only early in the fourteenth century. There are two different sorts of story in the collection. One sort concerns St. Francis and several others of the notable brothers of the first generation. These are vivid, varied, and abound in concrete individual details. Some of those about St. Francis himself are elaborations of incidents told in earlier *Legenda*. The other kind of story concerns the Friars of the second and third generations in the small friaries and remote cells of the March of Ancona. These are much more stereotyped, the element of the marvelous is much greater, its subjects have almost no individuality, and are not pictured so much as apostles as contemplatives and wonder-workers.

The proportion of historical fact to popular fancy in these stories is

⁷ AM II (1779), 533.

⁸ AM II (1779), 137.

⁹ *Extracts from the Journal of John Nelson*. New York: Coulton and Porter, 1856, 16th ed., p. 85.

hard to determine, and it is better not to make the attempt, for their value lies chiefly in their atmosphere, which of course vanishes before the techniques of the historical analyst. Sabatier's verdict is, "This literary jewel recounts the life of St. Francis, of his companions and of his disciples as it appeared at the beginning of the fourteenth century to the popular imagination."¹⁰ The value of the *Fioretti* lies not so much in what they say as in the way they say it; and we learn from them more about the nameless people who told the stories than we do about the people named therein.

The *Little Flowers* share in full measure the characteristics of hagiography in general: "The hagiographer's product," in the Bollandist Father Delehaye's words, "is a combination of biography, panegyric, and moral instruction."¹¹ Popular reflection of a more or less uncritical sort has played a great part, as all students acknowledge, in the creation of the legend of the Saint. Granted that Wesley would not, at least in Father Delehaye's view, be a saint, and that, in an age of printing, unreflective popular imagination has much less scope than it did in the Middle Ages, nevertheless we can see in the writings of the early Methodists about Wesley and his preachers, and about their own spiritual experiences, many of the same qualities that appear in the *Little Flowers* and the other Legends of St. Francis.

III

The materials for this little Methodist *florilegium* are of three sorts. First there are the reminiscences of John Wesley. Some of these were written down by himself, in his writings other than his *Journal* and *Letters*; being written down long after they occurred, they are not, so to speak, "spot reporting" like the material in those two. Others were written down by the earliest biographers, who knew Wesley intimately—chiefly Coke, Moore, and Whitehead. Secondly, I have drawn on the *Lives* of the early Methodist Preachers, as written by themselves to the *Arminian Magazine*. These are straightforward accounts of their unassumingly heroic labors in the "Connection." And thirdly, in a somewhat different vein, the contributions of the Methodist people (who may be likened in many respects to the "Third Order" of St. Francis) to the *Magazine*. Here the element of the "popular mind" which is so important in the formation and collection of "Little Flowers" has its most characteristic expression.

Everybody knows that the basis of our remarkably full knowledge of Wesley's life is in the *Journal* and the *Letters*. The historian in using

¹⁰ Sabatier, Paul, *Vie de S. François d'Assise*. Ed. définitive. Paris: Fischbacher, 1931, p. 559.

¹¹ Delehaye, H., S.J., *The Legends of the Saints*. London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1907, p. 68.

them feels the greatest possible confidence in their dependability, because the events are crisply narrated in orderly sequence, each firmly anchored as to the place, the date, and often even the hour of its occurrence. But there is another stratum of material on his life which makes quite a different impression. This material comes from Wesley's reminiscences, put in sermons, perhaps, or related to intimates long after the event. They are not anchored as to time and place, or, if they are, it is only after the fashion of captive balloons, with very long tethers. The information we glean from these reminiscences is not of crucial importance for a biography. But they are interesting in themselves, and taken as a whole, they present an aspect of Wesley rather different from the one we get from the fact-after-fact *Journal*.

Most of the stories in this category are well known. Some of them are quite compatible with his character as we know it, and are completely credible though we haven't chapter and verse in the *Journal* for them.

One such is the following, from his "Sermon on Dress":

Many years ago, when I was at Oxford, on a cold winter's day, a young maid (one of those we kept at school) called upon me. I said, You seem half starved. Have you nothing to cover you but that thin linen gown? She said, Sir, this is all I have! I put my hand in my pocket; but found I had scarce any money left, having just paid away what I had. It immediately struck me, Will thy Master say Well done, good and faithful steward? Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money which might have screened this poor creature from the cold! . . . Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid? ¹²

About the next one I am not so sure. It, too, strikes a Franciscan note, and it could well be true, but my own feeling is that it shows more delicacy of perception and adroitness of approach than is usually employed by Wesley, whose preferred methods were direct action and forthright speech. The story is recounted by a Scottish Preacher, Thomas Rutherford. He says that Wesley told it to him while they were riding together from Glasgow to Greenock, after they had encountered a barefoot girl to whom Wesley gave a shilling and some good advice.

When I was in America, I taught one school at Savannah and Mr. Delamotte taught another. He told me one day, that a part of the boys belonging to his school wore stockings and shoes, and the others did not; and that the former laughed at and ridiculed the latter, and thereby discouraged them; and that, though he prevented their doing so when they were under his eye, they did it when out of school: so that notwithstanding all the pains he had taken, it appeared to be a growing evil, and he did not know how to cure it; "I told him," said Mr. Wesley, "I thought I could cure it;" and added, "If you will take the care of my school next week, I will take

¹² *Works*, II, 262.

care of yours, and try;" which he readily consented to do. Accordingly, on Monday morning, I went into his school without either stockings or shoes. The children looked with surprise, first at me, and then at each other. I took no notice, but kept them to their work. I soon observed, however, that those who were without stockings and shoes, began to gather courage, and look with an air of consequence, now they had the master on their side. I did the same every day during the week; before the end of which, several of those who used to wear stockings and shoes came to school without them. Thus the evil was effectually cured! ¹³

Another such story is demonstrably an exaggeration, though it has been repeated from biographer to biographer from the days of Coke and Moore of 1792 down to our own time. Henry Moore professed to have the story from Wesley's own lips.¹⁴ It is a circumstantial account of Wesley's appearing before the Elders of the Moravian Church, sitting in solemn council under the presidency of Bishop Nitschmann, to receive their decision as to whether or not he should marry Sophy Hopkey, with whom he was deeply in love. His friend Delamotte, who had taken a dislike to the young lady, was sitting among them. After Wesley had solemnly promised to accept their decision, it was gravely given—in the negative. Now we know from the *Journal* for the 3rd and 5th of February, 1737, that he did, in his deeply troubled state of mind, personally consult some of his Moravian friends on the subject. But, as we would *a priori* expect, in view of the Lutheran-Moravian tradition on the Christian family, their answer encouraged him to marry her. The decisive consideration against the story as it stands in the tradition is that, as we know from other sources, the Bishop Nitschmann, who is supposed to have presided, left the Colony about a fortnight after Wesley met Sophy for the first time—long before he had fallen in love with her, or Delamotte had conceived his aversion to the marriage.

Wakeley includes the oft-told story which goes as follows:

At a certain time [one cannot help feeling that this beginning sounds very like "Once upon a time!"] John Wesley was going along a narrow street, when a rude, low-bred fellow, who had no regard for virtue, station, or gray hairs, ran against him and tried to throw him down, saying, in an impudent manner, "I never turn out for a fool." Mr. Wesley, stepping aside, said, "I always do," and the fool passed on.¹⁵

This tale has sometimes been assigned to a second encounter between Wesley and Beau Nash. The fitness of this *Sitz im Leben* of course comes from the pungent retort with which Wesley routed the *arbiter elegantium*

¹³ *MM XXXI* (1808), 490. The episode is not precisely dated, but seems to have been in May, 1776. My perusals of the Journals and Diaries of the Georgia period leave me with the impression that there is no mention in them of Wesley's teaching school at all. He did teach some individuals French, logic, and the like. But that he regularly taught a school seems altogether unlikely.

¹⁴ Moore, Henry, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley*, 2 vols. New York, 1824-5, I, 258.

¹⁵ *WAW*, p. 200.

in their historic encounter at Bath.¹⁶ But, as Arnold Lunn points out,¹⁷ the behavior related in the anecdote is no more consonant with Beau Nash's character than such a bitter retort is with Wesley's.

The following story is much more credible, for though "holy humility" did not come easily to Wesley, he did achieve it on occasion.

Mr. Bradford . . . was the chosen friend and traveling companion of Mr. Wesley for years. . . . His disposition was kind, and he was at the same time a man of unbending integrity.

"Joseph," said Mr. Wesley one day, "take these letters to the post."

Bradford. I will take them after preaching, sir.

W. Take them now, Joseph.

B. I wish to hear you preach, sir, and there will be sufficient time for the post after service.

W. I insist upon your going now, Joseph.

B. I will not go at present.

W. You won't?

B. No, sir.

W. Then you and I must part.

B. Very good, sir.

The good men slept over it. Both were early risers. At four the next morning the refractory "helper" was accosted by Mr. Wesley with, "Joseph, have you considered what I said, that we must part?"

B. Yes, sir.

W. And we must part?

B. Please yourself, sir.

W. Will you ask my pardon, Joseph?

B. No, sir.

W. Then I will yours, Joseph! ¹⁸

IV

Most of my Little Flowers come from the *Arminian Magazine*. It was founded by Wesley in 1778 for a purpose which sounds severe and abstract enough: "Our design is to publish some of the most remarkable tracts on the universal love of God, and his willingness to *save all men from all sin*."¹⁹ Stated negatively (as it often was) his first purpose was to combat the "horrible decrees" of predestination. His second, to those who understood Methodist terminology (in this instance somewhat veiled) was advocacy of the doctrine of Christian Perfection.

Actually the contents were never wholly given over to abstract doctrine. The first number, for instance, contained the initial installment of a life of Arminius and letters from Wesley's parents. He evidently received

¹⁶ The story of this famous meeting is in *WJJ*, II, 211ff.

¹⁷ Lunn, Arnold, *John Wesley*. New York: Dial Press, 1929, p. 137.

¹⁸ *WAW*, pp. 273f.

¹⁹ *AM* I (1778), Preface, p. v.

complaints during the first twelvemonth over the "monotony" of the material, for in the address to the reader at the beginning of the second year he says he will add variety by giving the lives of some of the Preachers. The third year he makes still further concessions to popular demand. Thus, even before Wesley's death, the original austere standards of the *Magazine* were liberalized considerably. In 1791, for instance, a number contained an article entitled "A Remarkable Account of a Murder, for which an innocent man was nearly condemned upon circumstances."²⁰ Another article in the same number was "An Account of the Pellew Islands, by Captain Wilson."

After Wesley's death the *Magazine* was continued by a committee appointed by the Conference. They promised that it would "be conducted on the same plan as Mr. Wesley left it."²¹ Two years later a heading in the Table of Contents reads "Experience and happy death of" followed by the names of fourteen different persons. Another heading over four items is "Remarkable conversions."

In 1798, in keeping with the shift in emphasis from the polemical to the practical, the title was changed from the *Arminian* to the *Methodist Magazine*; in 1822 it was changed again to the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, "to avoid confusion with the Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian publications."²²

The *Magazine* is a field full of flowers, sprung from the rich soil of the popular piety of the Methodists. In it are abundant illustrations of their conversion experiences and "happy deaths"—most of which bear the impress of sincerity in spite of their tendency to conform to a single pattern, evidently considered normal, even normative.

V.

The typical Methodist conversion experience needs no description; the stages by which the sinner under "conviction" passed from his despair to the joy of conscious forgiveness and reconciliation to God are, of course, not confined to Methodism, and they are well known to all. What these narratives share with the *Little Flowers* is the intensity of the accompanying emotion which projects itself as on a screen, onto the aspect of physical nature itself. One of Wesley's favorite preachers, who later became a soldier in the British Army in the Lowlands, John Haime, writes of his conversion as follows:

²⁰ *Ibid.*, XIV (1791), pp. 42ff.

²¹ *Ibid.*, XV (1792), Preface.

²² *A New History of Methodism*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909, I, 421.

I now began to wander about by the river side, through woods and solitary places, many times looking to heaven with a heart ready to break, thinking I had no part there. . . . I thought it hard to be banished from the presence of a merciful God.

One day as I walked by the Tweed Side, I cried out aloud, being all athirst for God, "Oh that thou wouldst hear my prayer, and let my cry come up before thee!" The Lord heard: he sent a gracious answer: he lifted me up out of the dungeon. He took away all my sorrow and fear, and filled my soul with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stream glided sweetly along, and all nature seemed to rejoice with me. I was truly free . . .²³

Thomas Olivers said:

Just as I came to the bottom of the hill at the entrance of the town, a ray of light resembling the shining of a star descended through a small opening in the heavens, and instantaneously shone upon me. In that instant my burden fell off, and I was so elevated that I felt as if I could literally fly away to heaven. . . . This light was so clear and the sweetness and other effects attending it were so great that . . . the several circumstances thereof are as fresh in my remembrance as if they had happened but yesterday.²⁴

VI

The element of the marvelous is not as strong in the Methodist writings as in the Franciscan, but it is not wholly absent. An experience of Richard Boardman is redolent of the sea-sands and cliffs of Wales, and has in it a dash of that imaginative "second sight" sometimes thought of as the especial property of the Celt.

After Boardman had returned to Britain from acting as Wesley's missionary in America, he had, in the course of one of his preaching tours in Wales, to ride over a tidal flat hemmed in by cliffs. His mare made slower progress than he had counted on, and the tide came in before he could reach one of the few paths up which he might climb the cliff wall to safety. Just as he was despairing of escape and had "commended his soul to God," two men put out in a boat, and reached him just as the sea came up to his knees as he sat on his mare. While they rowed him to safety, his mare swimming behind, his rescuer told how the night before he had been bidden in a dream to climb to the top of a hill he knew. Unable to resist the urgency of the call, he obeyed, and from the top had seen the preacher's danger. "Surely, sir, God is with you!" he commented. "I trust he is," was Boardman's simple reply.²⁵

One of Wakeley's anecdotes tells how in Newcastle Wesley visited a man whose soul was sick with despair to an extent which had kept his enfeebled body in bed for several years. Wesley said to him, "Brother Reed, I have a word from God unto thee: Jesus Christ maketh thee whole." The wretched man began to hope, went to hear Wesley preach that evening, and thereafter God "restored to him the light of his countenance" in such wise as to bring him back to health of both soul and body.²⁶

²³ *AM* III (1780), 208, 212.

²⁴ *AM* II (1779), 86.

²⁵ *AM* XVIII (1795), 23f.

²⁶ *WAW*, 284f.

The Dr. Whitehead who attended Wesley as his physician was also a lay preacher. He used both medicines and prayer in the practice of his healing art. Once, at a friend's request, he prayed most affectingly both before and after sermon for the recovery of the friend's daughter, who was on the point of death in a distant town. Some time later, she met Dr. Whitehead for the first time, and fainted dead away.

As soon as she came to herself, she said, "Sir, you are the person whom I saw in my dream, when I was ill of a violent fever. . . . The Lord in mercy heard your prayers, and he answered them to the healing of my wounded spirit and to the restoration of my body; and I have walked in the light of his countenance from that time to the present."²⁷

The ever-near and ever-active God not only rewarded his faithful ones, he punished the wicked quite as palpably. The sins which most frequently bring down the divine wrath (usually with fatal results) on their perpetrators are "profane swearing" and persecution of the Methodists. The following story, a sample of a great many of the kind, combines the two. It is not quite as picturesque as some, in which the evil-doer meets his end by violence (as, for instance, the butcher who used to disturb Methodist meetings, and who was run over by his own cart, so that his head "was smashed flat, and made a loud report resembling the bursting of a bladder!"),²⁸ but it may stand as representative of this whole cycle of tales:

Dear Sir: I believe the following short account to be strikingly illustrative of the words of Solomon: "The wicked shall fall by his own wickedness." If you think it worthy of a place in your useful Miscellany, its insertion will oblige,

Y^rs most respectfully, B. Shaw.

Spilsby, Apr. 7, 1812.

Since I came to travel on this Circuit a chapel has been erected by the Methodists of Toynnton, a village not far from Spilsby in Lincolnshire. The chapel being erected, and a day appointed for its being opened (a certain extremely wicked man in the town) swore when hell's hole should be opened (as he was pleased to call the chapel) he would procure a barrel of ale, which he would take to the door of one of his companions who lived near the chapel, where himself and others would sit and drink, and not only so, but they would also curse and swear, and ridicule all those who should come to the opening of the chapel. "But God judgeth the righteous, and he is angry with the wicked every day."

This persecutor of God's people was seized by a severe affliction and cast upon a bed of languishing; the time drew near for the opening of the chapel, when he had thought to have been preparing to ridicule the followers of Jesus: but, alas! at that time he was tortured with pain, and was making rapid strides to the chambers of the grave, through a gloomy passage. His eyes sink—his breast swells—his feet die—his vital pulse ceases to beat and his blood to flow. . . . The bitter arrow of death, which

²⁷ *MM* XXVII (1804), 271f. This story was contributed by Thomas Rankin, who, like Boardman, had been one of Wesley's missionaries in America.

²⁸ *MM* XXXIV (1811), 115.

had been fitting to its string, stuck fast in his heart: and, to the astonishment of those that knew him (especially those who had remarked his words) that very morning on which the chapel was opened, his soul was torn away, and his body left a lifeless corpse. Thus it appears "that evil doers shall be cut off for yet a little while and the wicked shall not be" . . . reader, remember.²⁹

One thing the Revival did was to render articulate many a "mute inglorious Milton" in England. The literary quality of the following allegory is not Miltonic, of course, but it is no little thing that a housekeeper at Kingswood School should have something to say, and should have been moved to say it as she did.

I saw a bank full of green plants just coming up. While I was admiring them, one came and began to dig it up, when to my great surprise, as he turned up the shovel, there appeared a large body of venomous creatures joined in one. Lifting up my hands and eyes I said, "How could these plants grow with such creatures at the root?" Then he laid them down, and they were spread almost all over the place. Afterwards a company of people, coming from the Foundery, began to kill them; in which I likewise was employed; but two clung about me for a long time. At last they also were killed, and I awaked. Reflecting on this, I thought the bank was my heart; the plants the graces God had sown therein; the man was the Preacher; the venomous creatures were my inbred corruptions; the two last of which were Pride and Unbelief.³⁰

When Brother Leo and two other early companions of St. Francis set about putting together their recollections of him, they said, "As it were from a pleasant meadow we pluck certain flowers that in our judgment are fairer than the rest." Wanderers across the meadows of earlier Methodist writing find, to be sure, many thorny polemical works, and many theological discourses which went early to seed and stand dried on their stalks of yesteryear. But also there are many "flowers fairer than the rest," sprung from the rich soil of their piety.

There is a continuity of Christian experience which makes Christians of all ages recognizable to each other as members of the household of faith. George Whitefield was once asked by a zealous Calvinist whether he thought he would meet the Arminian John Wesley in heaven. Whitefield disappointed and rebuked the zealot by replying, "I fear not, for he will be so near the eternal throne, and we will be at such a distance, we shall hardly get a sight of him." It takes no great exercise of the imagination, as one views these "flowers fairer than the rest," to picture Francis, Wesley, and Whitefield, all three, communing gladly together very close to the eternal throne, each recognizing in the others a spirit and an understanding of our common Lord profoundly akin to his own.

²⁹ *MM XXXV* (1812), 435.

³⁰ *AM II* (1779), 302. This was contributed by Sarah Ryan.

LIST OF TITLES ABBREVIATED

- AM.*—*The Arminian Magazine: Consisting of Extracts and Original Treatises on Universal Redemption.* London: Vols. I-X (1778-1797).
- MM.*—*The Methodist Magazine . . . Consisting Chiefly of Extracts and Original Treatises on General Redemption.* London: 1798-1821. (The volumes are numbered continuously with those of *AM*, XXI-XLIV.)
- WAW.*—Wakeley, J. B., *Anecdotes of the Wesleys: Illustrative of their Character and Personal History.* New York and Cincinnati, 1869.
- WJJ.*—Curnock, N., ed., *The Journal of the Rev. John Wesley.* Standard ed., 8 vols. London: The Epworth Press, 1916 (reprint of 1938).
- WJL.*—Telford, John, ed., *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley.* Standard ed., 8 vols. London: The Epworth Press, 1931.
- W-MM.*—*The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine.* London, from 1822 on. Volumes are numbered I in the new series, and XLV from the commencement.
- Works.*—Emory, John, ed., *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley.* 7 vols. New York: Lane & Scott, 1850.

The Paradox of Christian Leadership

NOLAN B. HARMON

THERE IS A PECULIAR paradox in the very nature of Christian Leadership. This is because all leadership requires certain capacities and certain actions which, in some of their manifestations, are the very antithesis of the deepest principles of Christianity. Let us look into this.

The first requisite of a leader is that he must lead. He cannot wait to be told how to lead, or for his followers to push him, otherwise he is no leader. He cannot "sense a trend" and get in front of it and be a true leader—though one of the most distinguished churchly figures of our generation, it always seemed to me, did it exactly that way. He had an uncanny ability to sense the direction in which the ecclesiastical weather vane was about to turn. Then he would point that way in the next few sermons he preached, and so get credit for leadership in the "coming" new and popular movement.

True leadership is not thus. It comes rather from an intrinsic certainty and a robust sureness based deep within. It was shown by the bluntness of Athanasius who was *contra mundum* if the world was *contra Athanasium*. It was the toughness of Luther whose burly German strength rather than the niceties of his theology bore down all before it in the Reformation period. Think of Luther waiting to "sense a trend!"

Many a man has been made a leader in the church, and then failed in respect to true leadership. He has become a Bishop or a Cardinal or a Dean or a Moderator and then made a poor fist at it, not because of the office but because of himself. All the miters and tiaras and stoles and chasubles—even a high pulpit flanked by C.B.S. microphones—have sometimes served to advertise weakness rather than display strength. A leader must lead, and this is as true in the Christian church as it is in a cavalry charge or in the board meeting of General Motors.

Another fact about leadership is that it is almost impossible to sepa-

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rate the leader from the cause he leads. His particular personality and mental endowments become a part of the movement. He may be following a lofty ideal, or driving ahead toward some event of glorious emprise. But his followers, sensing his strength and the clarity of his vision, instinctively follow him as a person. They let him interpret the cause rather than attempting to reason out for themselves the intricacies of the general situation or "what to do next." So men give their names to movements. Thus we have Lutherans, or Wesleyans, or Buchmanites, or Campbellites, Jacobites, Zwinglians, or what not.

This very fact serves to enhance in the leader's mind his own importance. By some psychological knot lying deep within, he cannot help identifying his personal fortune with the movement he leads. And to a certain extent he is right about it. A true leader is able enough and brilliant enough to know that he, his force and his power, are a large part of the success of his special cause. This, in turn, makes him sensitive about the place he occupies. His own pre-eminence becomes part of his cause and the natural-born leader brooks no interference with that.

Even John Wesley, a holy man and a good man, kept himself unyieldingly at the head of his Methodist group. "I did not seek any part of this power," he said. "I was never fond of it; I do now and always did bear it as my burden. . . . But if you will tell me any one, or any five men, who will do just what I do now, I will heartily thank both you and them." The postscript to this, of course, is that such five men were never found, and Wesley continued the unquestioned leader and father of his group until he passed out full of years and able to say, "The best of all is God is with us."

There is much of the dictator about every successful leader. This is true whether the man in question manages a business, conducts a crusade, or gets the local church to build a parish house. Some of the most arbitrary men have been sure that they were being very zealous for the Lord God of Hosts. Perhaps they were. Furthermore, there is something within human nature which applauds self-determining strength. We all feel better even in a democratic country when we have a "strong president" or an "able governor." Even in the church we prefer men who know their own minds, who are sure of their position, and are, as we say, competent to manage. In the long unrolling of the centuries we prefer the strength of a Hildebrand, or the force of Sixtus the Sixth, to the inanity of the Julians, the Albans, the Innocents (except Innocent the Third), a line of weaker persons. We applaud more the Luther who meant to go to Worms

if there were as many devils as tiles on the rooftops, than the Luther of the ninety-five theses, not one of which we remember. We thrill at John Knox's "Give me Scotland or I die." We even like to see a Methodist Bishop "tell off" a Roman Catholic Cardinal via the Associated Press. God forgive us all—especially the Cardinal!

But with it all when we come to the deep principles of Christianity there is something here that cuts athwart all the sort of thing we have discussed above. For Christianity teaches that we must prefer others to ourselves. Our Lord gave lesson after lesson to his own followers to warn them against the very thing which secular leadership always implies.

For "there arose a striving among the disciples as to who might be greatest." Jesus called them to him and (as we imagine) got them quiet, and then he said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them and their great men exercise authority over them. Not so shall it be among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you, must be your slave." (Matt. 20:25-27, R.S.V.) On another occasion when they were discussing who might be first in the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus took a child and said (in effect), "Unless you become like this child you shall not even enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."

Then on the last week of his life, in an upper room he did an unforgettable thing. He took a towel and girded himself and began to wash the feet of the Apostles. Having finished his lesson demonstrating the humility which they ought to have, he said (having silenced Peter, the most vociferous of the lot), "If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." That example should have been final.

St. Paul and the other apostles enjoined the same sort of subservience one to the other, and always called for meekness and humility. The church in turn took to heart this virtue and sounded its praise so that humility became one of the cardinal virtues. It was so highly praised that men pretended to live by it whether they did or not. Cardinal Wolsey for instance once put on one of his glittering and triumphal parades in London when he was at the height of his glory. But to show his humility, he sent all the richly gowned nobles ahead, while he followed seated upon a lowly mule at the back of the procession—all the better to advertise his pretended lowliness.

But do churchmen really feel that their leaders should be *humble* men? Certainly the leaders themselves do not always take kindly to the

practice of lowliness, whether or not they agree to it in principle. The Bishop, the Moderator, or the General Secretary feels that he ought to be at the head table, or at least "on the platform"—and perhaps he ought. A system of churchly heraldry comes into play. The Right Reverend outranks the Very Reverend, the priest (the "elder" the Methodists call him) outranks the deacon, the deacon the almoner or lay reader. A Doctor of Divinity gets a hood with a red band around his neck, and a gown with three velvet chevrons on the sleeve; a plain Reverend gets no red band and no sleeve adornment. How far this falls short of the ancient ecclesiastics who loved the chief seats in the synagogue and made broad their phylacteries, let others say.

At a notable state funeral conducted in Washington some years ago, the officiating prelate, dressed in the full robes of office, led the procession seated in a huge glassed-in car so as to be the center of all attention. Attending ministers of another denomination were two car-lengths behind. As a humble watcher from the curb, one got the impression that this man was much more important in his own thinking than the great personage—one of the greatest men of modern times—whose body he was then engaged in laying to rest.

They tell the story of one famous Christian leader who traveled about the world and was received with honor at all the important chancelleries and in the throne room itself by many mighty rulers. This triumphal visitation looked like success, especially as the secular newspapers featured the story and played it up. But no one knew that letter after letter had been written ahead of time to the poor mission workers and others in the immediate neighborhood of the respective monarchs before the great man began his travels. They were told that by all means they must secure an interview for the visitor from the ruler of their particular land—or else. What anguish and worry, what pennies and pounds it cost these poor missionaries to set up this tour, none will ever know. Was it for the Glory of God? One cannot think so.

The point is, there is a subtle temptation in this whole matter of Christian leadership. We in the Christian tradition are just as guilty as are our leaders when we glory in their human success, for it is *we* who are succeeding—or so we think—through them.

But perhaps temperament has something to do with it here, even national and racial differences. The Eastern people, indeed all Orientals, understand the injunctions of our Lord respecting humility much better than do we. We are closer to the Romans, as might be expected from our

Western heritage, than to the people of Asia Minor when it comes to a philosophy of leadership and government. Also we Americans especially are a very aggressive race, as are all Anglo-Saxons. One of the last viceroys of India who was struggling with Gandhi and the opposition Gandhi was heading, said to his compeers in London that he knew one way to settle the matter. "If," he said, "I would just strip myself stark naked, put a towel around my waist and squat down on the floor three days with this man, before saying one word, I believe I could then settle the whole business." In other words, East is East.

Japanese Christians when first introduced to the celebration of the Sacrament according to the English use (that is, of the Church of England, the Protestant Episcopal, and Methodist Churches) could not understand why the minister served himself *first* in the actual communication. All their polite instincts called for the celebrant to serve himself last. The explanation—a sound one—that this is done that the minister can better control the service and better serve the people when they communicate—did not seem to satisfy the courteous Orientals. They may have something, at that, for it is indubitable that the medieval mass, from which Cranmer moulded this part of the Prayer Book, was definitely priest-centered.

In truth, a hidden temptation often besets the minister and pastor because of his central position. He is apt to yield unconsciously to the insidious flattery which is always poured about him, perhaps unwittingly, by the people themselves. These naturally wish to look up to their minister, and often take even his side remarks as oracles of wisdom. In the meeting of the vestry or of the official Board, the minister's judgment upon crass business matters is often taken by the astute businessmen present as something having elements of Divinity in it. They start some large building venture, or put a mortgage upon their church when the minister so wishes, simply because they feel that in some peculiar way he, the Divine leader, knows best for the church. Sometimes the aftermath does not bear out this conclusion.

Certain ministers are known to employ press agents to get their names before the public, to secure speaking engagements for them, and in the great unashamed science of modern publicity, to blazon their names from the housetops and get their words out on all the airways. Apparently such men have their reward—but it is not, we think, where moth and rust do not corrupt, nor where men of higher news value do not sometimes break through and steal better headlines.

There comes in here, too, the unlovely outcropping of what is sometimes called professional jealousy. The Christian leader doesn't want the other Christian leaders to supersede him. Why should this desire to be esteemed higher than another be the sin that has tracked its way through the church in all ages? For the sin of the ministry, it is evident, lies just here. It is not simony, though there have always been men who would sell themselves and their sacred ministry for money. It is not immorality, and neither Hawthorne with his Arthur Dimmesdale, nor Sinclair Lewis with his Elmer Gantry, ever made out much of a case in this respect. It is the old, old business of striving for the chief places, James and John getting their mother to work behind the scenes for the chief seats; Peter looking at John and saying, "And what will this man do?" Here is an unlovely apostolic succession coming down from early times—Popes excommunicating each other, one minister seeking to get another minister's pulpit—all for the purpose not of being greatest in the kingdom of heaven, but of being *accounted greatest* which is an entirely different thing.

In making a judgment upon all this we can surely be at one in opposing what the Reformers and the Puritans in England called "prelacy." We do wish to see our leaders lead, but we must not forget, nor should they, Him whose followers we are. All too often there have been instances of what we must deplore as breaking the deep principles of our faith in order to achieve momentary success. God's strength is indeed sometimes made perfect in weakness. Hitler, following Nietzsche, despised the "weakness" of the self-abnegating principles of Christianity, and so we had the hammer of Thor versus the Cross of Christ! Strangely enough, today the hammer has a sickle with it.

The answer to it all comes when we realize that the ideal leader, the real leader, must always have a cause which he knows to be greater than himself. There have often been evil men who were great in the world's eyes because there was, even in their godless life, some cause, some enterprise, some vast work to which they gave themselves soul and body. Adolf Hitler, ignoble as he proved to be, risked his life by leading a "putsch" out of a Munich beer hall to bring in a united Germany. Clemenceau, the "Tiger" of France, "did not believe in God, did not believe in man," as Studdert-Kennedy said; "He only loved France, wildly, completely." Such men draw greatness from the ideal they follow.

Certainly the Christian in command, if he really has at heart the good of God's kingdom, will be able to find himself fitting into the par-

ticular niche which God has ordained for him. For there have been Christian leaders who avoided a pompous prelacy on the one hand, and good-natured, pliable subserviency on the other.

Phillips Brooks, great as he was in person and presence, always produced the impression that he was dependent on a greater than he. So have many others in the long roll of the Church's truly great. When the majesty of the Lord they profess to follow, dominates men heart and soul, the triviality of earthly protocol is brushed away.

At Princeton in the Graduate College they have in their lovely Proctor Hall a very unusual west window. The Liberal Arts are depicted in stained glass, with a figure representing each one of these Arts. In the center of the group is the figure of the Christ Child. By the art of the designer, this figure has been so made that when the evening sun dies away in the west, the face of the Christ Child is the last to be illumined in the huge window. There in this magnificent dining hall, students talking together over their coffee cups after the evening meal is over, or perhaps musing in quietness, are wont to watch while the great window slowly loses its glory as the sun disappears. Last of all remains always the face of the Christ. Under that window in Latin is written a line which every Christian, as well as those striving for a Master's degree, will do well to remember:

NEC VOCAMINI MAGISTRI: QUIA MAGISTER UNUS EST CHRISTUS

"And be ye not called masters; for the one Master is Christ."

The Old Evangelicalism and the New

WILLIS B. GLOVER

"EVANGELICAL," it has been pointed out, is as good a word among Christians as "existential" or "ecumenical" or "eschatological." In the broad sense of the term as referring simply to the gospel, this judgment would hardly be contradicted. But there is a more narrow usage which restricts the term "evangelical" to that part of Protestantism that has been under the dominant influence of the Wesleyan revival. In this restricted sense the term has come into ill favor in recent times. Several years ago the present writer was discussing terminology with a Methodist scholar who has been prominent in the revival of American theology. Since few Americans admit to being "neo-orthodox," I asked him what term best described people like the Niebuhrs, John Knox, Stanley Hopper, and himself; and I suggested that the best term so far put forth was "neo-evangelical." The reply of this scholar, whom I know to be an admirer of Wesley, was that "neo-evangelical" suggested an affinity with the evangelicals of past generations which he was anxious to avoid. He said, if he had to be labeled, he preferred the term "neo-Reformation."

Now it is my conviction that evangelical Christianity in the restricted sense of the term is not only respectable, but that failure properly to understand it results in a serious misunderstanding of recent Christian history, especially in English-speaking countries. The most serious breach in American Protestantism is the mutual misunderstanding and ill feeling that exists between the grass-roots evangelicalism in the rapidly growing, conservative, fundamentalist churches and the new existential, evangelical theology. If the evangelistic effectiveness of the former and the intellectual vigor of the latter could be made complementary instead of antagonistic, American Protestantism would be immeasurably strengthened. The fact that they remain antagonistic is due in considerable measure to false understandings of the old evangelicalism.

I

The nineteenth-century evangelical was a Protestant who made the

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experience of New Birth the center of his religious thought. His emphasis was on the predicament of sinful man and the redemption that is in Christ. The affinity of a theology so based on conversion and the "crisis theology" of the twentieth century is obvious.

The crucial weakness of the evangelical movement was intellectual. Despite the intelligence and learning of Wesley, this greatest of all modern religious movements produced no important theologian before P. T. Forsyth, and Forsyth's works came when evangelicalism was already in serious decline; moreover, he owed his theological depth in considerable part to the stimulation of Kierkegaard and Ritschl. Apologetically the Victorian evangelicals faced a very difficult situation. The major intellectual currents of the age all ran counter to the faith of evangelicals. Neither the idealism nor the materialism of the nineteenth century was ultimately reconcilable with traditional Christianity. Existentialism as a conscious philosophic orientation was not known among evangelicals before the end of the century, and a rationalistic, scholastic tradition blinded them to the apologetic significance of critical philosophy.

The theological approach of the evangelicals was a kind of Protestant scholasticism anchored at various points to proof texts from an inerrant Bible. One of the effects of this approach was to make the defense of biblical authority seem the primary apologetic problem. The concern of evangelicals over new developments in geology and biology is well known. In addition to these alien scientific pressures the general historical sense of the period was causing the ordinary Bible reader to be more alive to inconsistencies and anomalies in the Bible. It is a significant fact that Alexander Raleigh, who had not been influenced by the new biblical criticism, renounced the doctrine of inerrancy in his Chairman's Address to the Congregational Union of England and Wales in 1868. It is even more significant that the staunchly evangelical Raleigh continued to be respected and trusted as a leader of his denomination. The doctrine of inerrancy proved to be amazingly weak once it was questioned *from within the church* by men of outspoken evangelical orthodoxy. With a few exceptions like Raleigh, this questioning became articulate and public in the work of biblical critics.

Higher criticism of the Bible was at once the primary apologetic problem of the late nineteenth century and the way in which evangelicals were released from the impossible apologetic burden of defending an inerrant Bible. The only effective answer to the conclusions of a biblical critic was to make a sounder and more convincing criticism of the same problems.

But this was to accept criticism in principle, and ultimately it was to follow wherever the soundest criticism led. This was true, however, only when the matter in dispute was a critical and not a theological problem.

It is at this point that the history of evangelicalism in the United States diverged sharply from that in Great Britain. In the United States higher criticism of the Bible was identified with a liberal, naturalistic theology that denied the chief tenets of evangelical faith. The result was a radical split between liberal critics on the one hand and fundamentalist evangelicals on the other. In Britain the reaction to higher criticism was quite different, and a study of that reaction and its immediate theological results yields important insights into the nature of the evangelical movement and demonstrates the affinity between traditional evangelicalism and the twentieth-century revival of an evangelical theology. Nineteenth-century evangelicalism was much the same throughout the English-speaking world and was the immediate ancestor of American fundamentalism. It is, therefore, plausible that grounds for reconciliation between grass-roots American evangelicalism and the new evangelical theology may be found in the history of British evangelicalism in the last decades of the nineteenth century.

By the middle of the nineteenth century higher criticism was being introduced into England from Germany. The controversies over the critical works of Samuel Davidson and Bishop Colenso indicate that there was some possibility English churches might split over higher criticism as radically as American churches did at a later date. This line of development was cut short by the fact that the foremost defenders of traditional views of the New Testament were a trio of Cambridge scholars who undertook to meet the critics on their own ground and thus actually secured for New Testament criticism its first foothold in England. During the last quarter of the century evangelicals felt so well entrenched behind the conservative criticism of Westcott, Lightfoot, and Hort that New Testament criticism was a minor issue. It is very important in the history of English evangelicalism that these Anglican scholars, who were generally acclaimed as defenders of the faith, had taken a position which compromised beyond question the old doctrine of an inerrant Bible.

The criticism of the Old Testament has a separate history in England. The work of Colenso and Samuel Davidson and the early criticism of T. K. Cheyne were not well received by evangelicals. It was not until Old Testament criticism was espoused by men of unquestioned evangelical theology that it got a fair hearing among the evangelicals. This condition was met at the end of the seventies by several concurrent demonstrations that ad-

herence to the Wellhausen theory of the Old Testament was not inconsistent with a sound evangelical faith. It was about this time that Cheyne experienced a shift in theological perspective that made him acceptable to evangelicals, until he adopted an advanced liberal position over a decade later. In 1878 Archibald Duff joined the faculty of Airedale Congregational College. Duff followed Wellhausen in Old Testament criticism but accompanied his biblical criticism with such emphasis on what were considered the essential theological tenets of evangelicalism that he encountered no controversy as a result.

The most effective demonstration was the trial of William Robertson Smith by the Free Church of Scotland. In spite of a fervent prosecution in a formal church trial by the exacting standard of the Westminster Confession, Robertson Smith was acquitted. Although he frankly accepted Wellhausen's Old Testament criticism, he also affirmed his agreement with the Westminster article on Scripture and successfully defended his position. This was convincing evidence that higher criticism was not necessarily inconsistent with evangelical faith. In the future critical opinions had to be combated on critical and not on theological grounds. The history of Old Testament criticism in England for the remainder of the century is the history of its gradual acceptance despite a series of minor controversies that never seriously disturbed the life of the churches.

It is the theological effects of higher criticism, however, which are most revealing of the nature of the old evangelicalism. There was no immediate renaissance of theology; the decay of Calvinism which had begun early in the century continued, and no new evangelical synthesis took its place. Yet once the fundamental question of religious authority was effectively raised, British evangelicals had to examine the reality of that Christian experience which was the center of their faith. In doing so they anticipated some of the most profound and most characteristic insights of the twentieth-century revival of theology.

II

Changes in the attitude of British evangelicals toward the Bible made it difficult for them to assume any longer that the Bible was the ultimate religious authority. They were forced to re-examine the whole problem of authority and specifically the problem of revelation. Their approach to this problem was essentially experiential rather than rationalistic. The point of departure was the fact that they did have faith in Christ, that this faith had not been destroyed by the renunciation of biblical inerrancy, that,

in fact, they found it impossible to deny the reality of the gospel. Since the Bible obviously was not the final authority, what was? The problem was approached in this way not merely by an isolated scholar here or there but by the body of articulate evangelicals who furnished intellectual leadership in the churches.

R. W. Dale of Birmingham had been seriously disturbed by biblical criticism when most evangelicals were still only dimly aware of its existence. At first it seemed to him that the critics might destroy the authority of all the Bible except the Gospels without seriously undermining the Christian faith, but that if the historical authority of the Gospels was undermined, all was lost. By 1869, however, Dale had advanced beyond this point. His Annual Address as Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales in that year was on *Christ and the Controversies of Christendom*. And in 1874 he developed the same theme in a lecture at Exeter Hall on *Protestantism, Its Ultimate Principle*. The search into the reality of his Christian experience had led him back to the fountainhead of the Reformation in the evangelical faith of the great Reformers.

From Dorner's *History of Protestant Theology* Dale had learned that Protestant biblicism did not originate with the first mighty impulse of the Reformation but developed later in the effort of theologians and controversialists to find an objective authority. Religious authority for the Reformers themselves, it seemed, had been in Christ as known in Christian experience. An ultimate authority must be self-authenticating, for if it requires external evidence of its authority it is not ultimate. Thus Dale perceived that not the Bible but the revelation of which the Bible spoke was the self-authenticating religious authority.

To put the whole case, for the sake of clearness, in a somewhat exaggerated form: when I read the *Gospels*, I think nothing of the authority of the book which contains them, for the glory of God revealed in Christ shines directly upon me; and when, having received Christ, I read the *Epistles*, I think nothing of the authority of the writers, for I myself know that what they say is true.¹

The authority of the Bible was a secondary authority derived from the authority of the Revelation it recorded. As Dale was to express the same idea at a later date: "The elaborate reasons, the formal demonstrations, which the intellect regards with pride as a row of stately columns upholding its faith, are suspended from the faith which is supposed to rest upon them."²

¹ Dale, R. W., *Protestantism, Its Ultimate Principle*. London: The Milton Publishing League, 1877, pp. 59-60.

² Dale, R. W., *The Living Christ and the Four Gospels*. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1890, pp. 73-74.

Dale realized that the decision men made with regard to the Revelation of God in Christ was a religious commitment and not merely a logical conclusion. This, he held, was as true of those who rejected the Revelation as of those who accepted it. Attitude toward the authority of the Bible was determined more by this religious decision than by any weighing of the evidence concerning the authenticity of the biblical books.

In his experiential approach and in his reaffirmation of the subjective aspect of revelation Dale was restoring to English evangelicalism some of the most valuable insights of the Reformation. Mid-nineteenth-century nonconformists had overemphasized the individualism of the Reformation to the neglect of a proper appreciation of the corporate church. In Dale a reversal of tendency may be observed. Dale was known to his contemporaries as a "high-church Congregationalist"—a phrase later used to describe P. T. Forsyth, who had a similar doctrine of the church. It was through the church that the gospel came down through the ages. Nineteenth-century Christians knew Christ through the personal testimony of their contemporaries and those before them who had verified their Christian faith in religious experience. In his book, *The Atonement*, published in 1875, Dale calls for a Christian witness that is even more lacking in our day than in his:

We must not be satisfied with an attempt to demonstrate the authority of the Christian faith; we must so preach it that, even apart from demonstration, its authority shall be confessed. The consciences of men must be made to apprehend the reality of sin, and their hearts must be filled with dread and hope by the anger and mercy of the living God.³

If Dale was reviving insights for long lost sight of by evangelicals, he was finding them in an experience that he shared with his fellows in the evangelical churches, and he was not for long a lonely voice.

The *Congregationalist*, which Dale edited from 1872 through 1878, reflected his views. Notwithstanding the obvious affinities he had with Schleiermacher and the Ritschlians, Dale did not read German and was not influenced by the Germans. As Forsyth has pointed out, his conscious affinities were with the French evangelical theologians. In 1872 he published in the *Congregationalist* three articles by Edmond de Pressensé on the subject of religious authority. In these articles, De Pressensé takes essentially the same position as Dale and gives an even clearer statement of it. Religious authority, he held, must be direct, must respect human freedom, and is essentially moral. The living Christ is presented to man's

³ Dale, R. W., *The Atonement*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1875, p. 31.

conscience directly by the Spirit of God, but Christ does not coerce belief. He stands at the door and knocks. The response of man is moral and not merely intellectual. It was a living union with a living Christ which had been religious authority for the Reformers, and nineteenth-century Christians had need to return to it. De Pressensé specifically points out the folly of man's trying to dictate to God that the Scriptures must meet the requirement of infallibility before he will accept the Revelation of God which they record.

In 1884, D. W. Simon, Principal of Theological Hall of the Scottish Congregational Church, Edinburgh, developed the same theme in a very able article in the *British Quarterly Review*. The title of Simon's article was "The Authority of the Bible," but in treating this subject he examines the more general problem of religious authority. He found his inspiration in the Reformation, especially in Calvin and John Owen. The Reformers had made a distinction between general and special assurance. General assurance might come from rational consideration of evidence; but the more important special assurance came only through the witness of the Holy Spirit working in and through Christian experience. As for Simon himself, he thought rational arguments for the authority of Scripture of very little value:

As I have remarked already, however, the conception of the Bible, which such persons believe themselves able to justify by an appeal to the Church and reasonings, never was arrived at by such means. It was reached chiefly by the path of experience; then it was formulated; the formula was handed on to others; and the effort was and still continues to be made, to establish its correctness to those who lack the experience. It is an analogous process to that by which Christians sometimes try to prove by arguments that God—namely, their God, the God whom they trust and love and know—exists, and is really objectively what He is to them. Some minds may be induced to think that the premisses warrant the conclusion, that the logic is correct; but it is not so. No one can properly maintain that God really is what the living Christian knows he is, without living Christian experience. Argument carries us a certain distance; it cannot legitimately carry us the whole way.⁴

Principal Simon had studied under Samuel Davidson and taken a Ph.D. at Tübingen, but his appeal is to the Reformers and to evangelical Christian experience.

III

In the Free Church of Scotland a movement toward a more profound understanding of the nature of revelation had begun more than a decade before in the classroom of A. B. Davidson at the Free Church College, Edinburgh. Davidson was professor of Hebrew and Old Testament

⁴ Simon, D. W., "The Authority of the Bible," *British Quarterly Review*, LXXX (1884), pp. 373-374.

exegesis. In accordance with the historical sense of the age, Davidson came to see the revelation of the Old Testament not in the words of the Bible but in the action of God in the history of Israel. The Bible was the record of this revelation. It was infallible in the sense that it presented an infallible revelation, but not in the sense that it was a record without error. Davidson taught a whole generation of Free Church scholars and preachers to approach the Bible in this way and so prepared them for the higher criticism that was coming out of Germany. William Robertson Smith was one of his students.

Another of the early Scottish Bible critics was A. B. Bruce. Bruce delivered a series of lectures at the Presbyterian College, London, which were published in 1881 under the title *The Chief End of Revelation*. The lectures were apologetic in aim and were directed against those "children of the *Zeitgeist*" of whom Matthew Arnold was the outstanding representative. Bruce's method was constructive; he sought to clarify the true nature of revelation and so to make irrelevant many of the contemporary attacks on Christianity. He spoke out of the evangelical faith of his age. Stimulated by the current apologetic problems, Bruce, like many others, had probed more deeply into the meaning of this faith and had found enlightenment and inspiration in the insights of the great Reformers. The thesis of his book, stated in his own words, has a modern ring. Allowing for some disagreement concerning any "natural revelation," it could have been written by Brunner or Barth or William Temple or Gustaf Aulén or Richard Niebuhr. The chief end of revelation, he insists, is redemption, and Christianity "is emphatically and before all things the religion of redemption."

Revelation, then, does not mean causing a sacred book to be written for the religious instruction of mankind. What then does it mean? It signifies God manifesting Himself in the history of the world in a supernatural manner and for a special purpose. Manifesting *Himself*; for the proper subject of revelation is God. The Revealer is also the Revealed. This is recognized in the words of the Westminster Confession: "It pleased the Lord to reveal Himself . . ." Manifesting Himself in *history*, I add, to distinguish the revelation now under discussion from that which God has made of Himself in *Nature*. . . .

The revelation recorded in the Scriptures is before all things a self-manifestation of God, as the God of *grace*. In that revelation God appears as one who cherishes a gracious purpose towards the human race. The revelation consists, not in the mere intimation of that purpose, but more especially in the slow but steadfast execution of it by a connected series of transactions which all point in one direction, and at length reach their goal in the realization of the end contemplated from the first.⁵

⁵ Bruce, Alexander B., *The Chief End of Revelation*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 5th ed., 1896, pp. 57-58.

Bruce does not elaborate a new evangelical theology, but he does indicate how revelation is related to theology. In the introductory chapter he condemns the use of the Bible as an encyclopedia of theological proof texts. Such a usage resulted from the misunderstanding of revelation as essentially instructional. This use of the Bible not only rendered the mind insensible to all biblical material that was not suited to such a method, but it was likely to deprive the Bible of its living characteristics and transform it into a dead thing. The dogmatic conception of revelation implied that salvation depended on the knowledge of certain doctrines. This, in turn, led to the conclusion that the patriarchs of the Old Testament had the sum of saving knowledge and hence to a denial of the progressive character of the historical revelation. In the light of recent biblical studies, Bruce considered this a *reductio ad absurdum*.

Revelation was not essentially doctrinal, but it did have doctrinal significance. The last chapter of the book is "The Doctrinal Significance of Revelation." Every religion, Bruce pointed out, has its characteristic theory of the universe, and Christianity is no exception. As the religion of redemption, Christianity "is anything rather than speculative, a fact, not a theory"; nevertheless, the fact of revelation implies something about God, man, and the world. These speculative presuppositions of the Christian revelation are everywhere implied in the Scriptures, although the Bible makes no effort in the direction of a systematic theology. There are many matters of great doctrinal importance, however, that may be derived from the fact of revelation without direct recourse to the Bible. As examples of such doctrines Bruce discusses creation, God as ethical and personal, man as a moral creature transcending the natural world, and the reality of sin.

The discussion of sin is particularly interesting. Bruce does not seem to grasp the point that man sees himself as sinner in the light of that loving forgiveness of God which is central to the Christian revelation; but his comments on sin do, nevertheless, show penetrating insight.

Sin is a reality for God; in other words God is a Holy Being. All slight, minimizing, apologetic, optimistic conceptions of sin as a triviality, an infirmity, a necessity, or as the negative side of good—"good in the making"—are incompatible with honest faith in an economy of redemption. . . . To take a genial view of sin may appear humane, but it is not respectful to the sinner. It is to treat human nature with contempt, to regard man . . . as a victim of necessity who only deludes himself when he imagines he is free; as a thing, not a person; an animal, not a rational being.⁹

As to the origin of sin, that was a matter of speculation rather than

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 267-268.

of revelation. Schleiermacher's denial of the fall might be false in fact, but it was not incompatible with faith in a revelation of grace. Bruce's statement that a religion of redemption from sin "does not necessarily shut us up to any particular view of the origin of sin" anticipates the dictum of Forsyth that revelation "is silent about the origin of sin; it recognizes the fact and brings the remedy."⁷

IV

Theological insights like those of Dale and Bruce and others not specifically mentioned here did not constitute a theological renaissance. The orientation of the British evangelicals at the end of the century was still apologetic and defensive. Their approach to the faith was religiously existential, but they did not have the intellectual power to renounce the rationalistic assumptions of the old Protestant theology and make the facts of evangelical experience the basis for understanding the totality of human experience. Their theology was, therefore, confused by contradiction in basic assumptions and inconsistency in method.

The first British evangelical to make effective use of existentialism in constructing a theology was P. T. Forsyth; and he, though approved by his fellow evangelicals, was never during his lifetime really understood by them. The evangelicals still expected theology to lay a rational basis for faith, and could not understand a theology which made the faith a basis for any rational understanding of experience.

When the theological weakness of the period has been fully admitted, however, the theological insights of the British evangelicals are sufficient to demonstrate the thesis here presented. That thesis is that the religion of the great evangelical revival of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is essentially the same religion which has been so profoundly explored in the theological revival of the twentieth century.

The evangelical revival produced effective preaching but lacked an adequate theology; the neo-evangelical movement of this century is producing profound theology but lacks effective preaching. To borrow a phrase from Stanley Hopper, evangelicals need to retrace their own history "possessively," and find in it a unity that will close the breach between evangelistic fundamentalists and evangelical theologians.

The theologians need to recognize that traditional evangelicalism is

⁷ Forsyth, P. T., "Revelation and the Person of Christ," in W. H. Bennett, et al., *Faith and Criticism*. London: Sampson Low Marston and Co., Ltd., 1893, p. 104.

more than an obscurantist scholasticism; that, whatever its theological weakness, it has known *religiously* (or existentially) the plight of man without God and the redemption that is in Christ. American fundamentalists, on the other hand, may profit from the realization that evangelical faith is consistent with a free approach to biblical criticism. Such a realization will make it possible for them to avail themselves of the intellectual leadership of the most profound movement in theology since the sixteenth century.

The theologians have much to learn from those who are still aggressively leading unlearned men to repentance and faith, and conservative evangelicals have much to learn from those who can describe and explain evangelicalism in a manner relevant to the intellectual climate in which we all live.

Book Reviews

War, Communism and World Religions. By CHARLES S. BRADEN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 281 pp. \$3.50.

In the latter portion of 1952 and early 1953, the writer of this book spent seven months traveling around the world and interviewing religious, political, and other leaders on the impact of war and Communism upon the religion of each particular country. He also investigated the converse question of the importance of each religion in deterring or stopping the spread of Communism. To this task he brought the breadth of sympathy, objectivity, and outlook of a professor of comparative religion.

The religions considered were Shintoism in Japan; Confucianism in China, Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia; the northern or Mahayana Buddhism of these countries; the Hinayana or southern Buddhism of Thailand, Burma, and Ceylon; Hinduism in India; Islam in China, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, the Middle East, and Egypt; Judaism in Israel; and both Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity in all of these countries and in the West. His findings, as recorded in *War, Communism and World Religions*, are by the very nature of the case and by virtue of his mode of their presentation, inductive in character. For the most part they express not so much his own observations as answers to his questions by religious, political, and other leaders of each particular religious faith in each particular country.

With one exception, the conclusions are qualified with minority dissenting opinions recorded. The one unqualified statement made in the entire book is interesting. In answer at the end to his question, "How has Communism affected Christianity?" he replies, "It will not be an overstatement, I think, to say that its effect upon Christianity has been more devastating than any other single thing that has happened since the beginning of the Christian era" (p. 256).

Professor Braden does not consider the question, but this reader, at least, has the impression from reading his book as a whole, that most certainly Islam and probably even the Oriental religions outside of China and Korea have stood the impact better. In Japan, for example, he found religion vital and flourishing. In India and other South Asian countries, he found the dropping of the atomic bomb upon Hiroshima by Christians to have given the Christian peoples, if not Christianity, a black mark in these Asian areas. With respect to China, his findings are somewhat pessimistic with regard to the capacity of either Confucianists or Christians there to withstand Communist purposes and methods.

In one respect, however, he finds Christianity and Judaism more like Islam in being able to withstand Communism than are the Far Eastern religions of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. The reason is that in these Oriental religions worship is done mostly privately in the home of the patriarchal joint family. Even when it occurs in the temple, it occurs as an independent act at an independently selected moment of the day. Thus, as Stella Kramrich in her classical work, *The Hindu Temple*, has written, congregationalism is completely foreign to Hinduism. To almost the same extent this can be said of Buddhism and Confucianism. This focusing of religious worship in the privacy of the home has the effect of leaving these Far Eastern religions without the organized institutional unity and centralized leadership necessary to withstand a highly organized and disciplined movement like

Communism. None the less, while these Oriental religions are not able alone to stop Communism, Professor Braden's findings tend to confirm the thesis that they are important deterrent factors, and certainly factors to be considered by any wise religious statesmanship which would work to have the traditional religions, rather than Communism, guide mankind.

The foregoing reference to worship in the patriarchal joint family raises one question which does need to be asked about one of this book's suggested conclusions. This conclusion is that religion does not play quite as great a role in the contemporary Asian's life in countries such as Thailand, India, and Burma as one would first suppose. My own observations in Thailand would lead me to rate the weight of Buddhist religious influence there now as greater than Professor Braden does. I would say the same of India. My impressions in Ceylon agree with his. The question, however, which one must ask in all these Asian countries is this: Does a Westerner who, in his own country, is accustomed to estimate religious interest by congregational manifestation in church attendance, discount sufficiently for the fact that the major portion of religious activity in the Oriental religious countries is manifested out of sight, in the home, rather than in the Western, outward community forms? In any event, it is important to realize that this question must always be asked.

The most important thing, at least to this reviewer, about this book is the implicit question, not explicitly stated, which it raises. One very disturbing fact is brought out. It appears in its sharpest form in Professor Braden's report on China. It is equally present, however, in all the other nations and cultures. This fact is that the foundation for the present success of Communism in Asia was, in considerable part, laid by Christian religious and secular educational, political, and industrial influences before Communism came on the scene. Professor Braden's reports on China make it unequivocally clear that one of the main things making it so easy for the Communists to take over the mainland Chinese was the destruction of the indigenous Confucian religious, ethical, and social institutions by Western Christian and secular liberals before the Communists sowed their seed.

Nor are Western Christian liberals alone responsible for this. In China, temple rites were abolished after 1912 with the revolution of Sun Yat-sen, as were Confucian teachings in the schools. Even today in Chiang Kai-shek's Formosa the question of putting Confucian teachings back into the schools is being merely debated. Similarly Western missionary activity tended to treat the Confucian, Buddhist, Taoist, and other religious symbols as idols, thereby breaking down centuries-old moral norms with which the native Asians might have withstood the Communists' economic and ideological lures and attacks. Furthermore, speaking again of China, Professor Braden writes, "... Western educational ideals and methods had gone far to weaken family ties before Mao Tse-tung began his determined attempt to win China to Communism" (p. 69). Have Western religious and secular missionaries and the more recent teachers of American "know-how" to non-Western peoples faced, to say nothing about having learned, the lesson which these facts have to teach them?

Is not the lesson clear? Does it not involve two factors, the one negative, the other positive? Negatively, have not Western religious, educational, medical, and technological leaders conceived their task in non-Western countries and cultures with too little regard for the effect of their own Christian and secular beliefs and ways upon native beliefs, values, and institutions? Positively, is it not necessary for

Western religious and secular missionaries abroad to conceive their task as that of spiritually understanding and revivifying the native culture, from its own deepest spiritual standpoint, and then helping the natives to graft onto the revived native plant our own different Christian and secular values and ways, thereby creating a novel spiritual, institutional, and cultural synthesis?

Concretely, this means that Western missionaries will foster indigenous religious symbols, not treating them as idols to be destroyed, and place Christian symbols beside them, after the manner actually practiced by the Vedanta Hindu missionaries in the United States, thereby enabling the new religion and the old to sustain and enrich one another, perhaps even preparing the way later on for a new and richer single religious symbolism. It means, also, that instead of judging the foreign religion by the abuses into which any religion falls with time, due to practitioners who mumble its forms without understanding its meaning and spirit, the religious missionary will go beneath the outward forms and abuses of the native religion to its underlying technical philosophical meaning and living spirit. When the missionary does this, he will learn that the native religion of any non-Christian culture has as much to teach him as he has to teach it.

It means also for a secular missionary abroad, such as an industrial engineer or an agricultural expert, that he will stop treating native foreign practices as if they were totally outmoded. He will hesitate to introduce highly mechanized Western know-how, which entails, for its effective use, mechanical thinking upon the part of the native users which they do not possess. It means too that these secular missionaries of a Western mechanical and industrial society will first study the native culture, mentality, patriarchal joint-family-life and village-elder social system; they will then realize that the introduction of large-scale mechanization and industrialization will have the inevitable result of breaking up the joint family system, to which the entire native system of morality and values, even the religious worship, are essentially tied. The secular agricultural expert and industrial engineer will then realize that his reforms cannot be carried forward safely by him alone, but must be accompanied by a consciously thought out and applied moral and spiritual reconstruction which will find a way of expressing the indigenous native religious and moral values in the new forms of a *partially* Westernized and industrialized society. Furthermore, what is true for Western religious and secular reformers in non-Western societies is equally true of native reformers, such as Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, Pandit Nehru, and Kemal Ataturk, who have introduced Western institutions and ways into their native cultures.

Has not the time come, therefore, for Christian religious leaders of the West to reconsider their missionary aims and methods? Is the day not here also when Western secular educators, technologists and statesmen, and non-Western native reformers must do the same thing?

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Christian Realism and Political Problems. By REINHOLD NIEBUHR. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953. ix-203 pp. \$3.00.

Eleven essays make up this book. In "The Illusion of World Government," "Why Is Communism So Evil?" "The Anomaly of European Socialism," and "The Foreign Policy of American Conservatism and Liberalism," Niebuhr is the acute analyst of political events. He underscores the dilemmas and tragedies men expe-

rience when they oversimplify the struggle between good and evil in terms other than those of the Christian realist. In these more political essays, and in the ethical and social essays, "Democracy, Secularism, and Christianity," "The Christian Witness in the Social and National Order," one realizes again and again that Niebuhr is not so much "justifying" his Christian realism as he is finding that history becomes clearer and takes on greater meaning only as the perspective of Christian realism is adopted.

Whatever else Niebuhr is, and whether his particular analyses are right or wrong, there is no doubting that he is an empiricist of the human spirit. He finds the nature of that spirit in its historic struggles, and the nature of history in the tensions of spiritual existence. What Niebuhr keeps before himself, and before us, is the totality of the human struggle—not simply man at his best and man at his worst, but man, his society, and his struggle, as a mixed fusion of these aspects and possibilities. Thus he is forever warning us against oversimplification, or, in Hegelian terms, against the abstractness which comes from overemphasis on the part and the phase. Each of these essays was for this reader not only a needed and illuminating analysis of important issues (repaying every minute spent with them), but a lesson in Christian realistic perspective. Would that more space could here be given to any one of them, or to the two on the abstractness of scientific methodology: "Faith and the Empirical Method in Modern Realism" and "Ideology and the Scientific Method." These first eight essays might be considered an empirical corroboration of the fundamental theses of the Christian realism suggested in the last three essays, to which we must pay more attention.

In the essay, "Augustine's Political Realism," Niebuhr agrees with Augustine that self-love, both at the bodily and spiritual level, defies all human efforts for community. But Augustine's conviction that even man's rational pursuits are vulnerable to the corruption of self-interest, leads him to underestimate the factors that make for community in human nature. For if self-love is universal, all that can hold the city of man together is a prudential concept of justice as a basis for collective relations. Augustine, exposing the sandy foundations of such a social structure, insisted that only as a larger love than that of the group opposed self-love and its calculating prudence could a healthy society be established.

Now, Niebuhr, like Augustine, uses the power of self-love against "modern sentimentalities" and idealistic planning based on perfectionistic and natural-law conceptions of goodness. But he wonders whether "an approach to politics which does not avail itself of the calculations of justice, may be deemed realistic" (132). It is not enough, in other words, to appeal to the "leavening influence of a higher upon a lower loyalty or love" without doing our uttermost to perfect the actualization of that love "by calculations of justice which define our mutual responsibilities" (136). Furthermore, the love that is adequate for the task is not the *amor dei* of Augustine which underemphasizes "the absurd principle of the Cross, the insistence that the self must sacrifice itself for the other" (140). Augustine does not see clearly enough that "the kind of self-giving which has self-realization as its result must not have self-realization as its conscious end; otherwise the self by calculating its enlargement will not escape from itself completely enough to be enlarged" (141).

To sum up Niebuhr's conclusions: Men fall into cynical pessimism if they do not take both the reality of human freedom and the reality of love seriously enough. They fall into naïve sentimentality if they do not take the power of self-love seriously at every level of human life and think that some enlightened system

of justice for all will work. What is called for is the realization that no system of justice will sustain itself if it is not motivated by self-giving love (*agape*). But that self-giving love will never yield the best society open to men unless it is worked out realistically in the light of the interpenetrating and interlocking interests and abilities of men.

The nature of this love in its relation to moral obligation and law is intriguingly discussed in the next essay, "Love and Law in Protestantism and Catholicism." Here again, Niebuhr pleads for righting, or recognizing, the dialectical balance between love and law. *Agape* calls for more than the distributive justice of law, or mutual love (*philia*), in which there is always a mixture of equal advantage for self. Thus, on the one hand, Niebuhr insists that the "final form of love . . . meets the needs of others without calculating comparative rights," and "cannot be embodied in any moral code," or "achieved by the compulsion [sic!] of a sense of obligation" (160). On the other hand, such "heedless" love, while keeping all other loves from generating "resentment" about an absence of perfect "reciprocity," is not separable from the realm of rational love by "a neat line."

Niebuhr clearly refuses to consider *agape* and *eros* as noncontinuous with each other (cf. 169). Yet he cannot understand the quality of *agape* except in terms of grace, beyond all rational understanding. Thus he says that such sacrificial love as that of a soldier giving his life for his comrade beyond the call of duty is possible "only by an accretion of strength to the will which is in the realm of grace" (161). *Agape* is not in man as conceived naturalistically. It enters human life "at the limits of human possibilities," when we realize that "there are things we ought to do which we cannot do merely by the strength of our willing but which may become possible because we are assisted by the help which others give us by their love, by the strength which accrues to our will in moments of crises, and by the saving grace of the Spirit of God indwelling our Spirit" (154).

Thus Niebuhr pleads for another dialectical tension: We shall only do justice to our situation when we realize our obligation to seek the human good which our concrete natures make possible in social terms. But we court defeat if we think that any particular rationalized system of life will be kept from degenerating into fear-inspiring egotism without the motivation that transcends any "human" calculation of interest.

In the final essay, "Coherence, Incoherence, and Christian Faith," I see a similar dialectic, this time applied to the dialectical relation of faith to coherence and incoherence. Coherence, as Niebuhr conceives it, calls for a neat, all-comprehensive rationalistic system that integrates at the expense of genuine freedom. "The whole realm of genuine selfhood, of sin and grace, is beyond the comprehension of various systems of philosophy" (178). If this is true, and if this is all that coherence can mean, radical human freedom and the norms of love must be considered "supranatural affirmations of the Christian faith" (179). Human life thus viewed is "a drama of an engagement between the self and God and between mankind and God, in which all sorts of events may happen. The only certainty from a Christian standpoint is that evil cannot rise to the point of defeating God; that every form of egotism . . . stands under divine judgment; that this judgment is partially executed in actual history, though not in complete conformity with the divine righteousness, so that history remains morally ambiguous to the end; and that a divine redemptive love is always initiating a reconciliation between God and man. According to this answer, a suffering divine love is the final coherence [sic!] of life." (183-184.)

But what is this other than saying that true coherence is not a simple harmony, or a neat system built on a logical pattern? What is called "ultrarational" and "suprarational" is in fact a system governed not by mathematical logic but by dynamic categories of purpose and of moral-religious personality. Niebuhr sees beyond and redefines most oversimplification, as we have seen. Does he himself not accept an oversimplified conception of reason instead of moving on to a more adequate conception? Indeed, the empirical spirit in these essays, united with his concern to see the tensive wholeness of life, is the very conception of reason which some modern philosophers (like Whitehead and Brightman) have been expounding! Niebuhr's own love of the dialectical, his own acute vision of life as *both-and* not *either-or*, seems too rich to be seduced by a search for certainty which allows him to assert for faith a conclusiveness he fears in reason. In any case, if Christian realism were not an hypothesis which has the capacity to integrate the different facets of human experience, illuminating their challenge to each other and to the world, would Niebuhr himself consider the Christian faith the mystery that solves mysteries?

That Niebuhr is actually guided by this *empirical coherence* as his test of truth comes out again in this last chapter when he warns that the "suprarational affirmation of faith" be kept from being "too simply irrational" (187). On the other hand, he is anxious to avoid assuming, as he says the liberal does, "a simple harmony between our highest aspirations and God's will" in the temporal process (190). Again, from placing too much "reliance on the coherences and rationalities" of life he would not swing to the perils of existentialism by setting the wisdom of God in contradiction to that of the world and the coherence open to cultural disciplines (191). Finally, convinced that we must take "the coherences and causalities of life and history more seriously than Kierkegaard" (197), he yet fears the peril of reducing Christianity to "yet another philosophy" (198). But must we avoid "yet another philosophy" if it is "profounder than other philosophies because it embodies heights and depths which are not comprehended in the others" (198), and thus is more reasonable?

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Christian Faith and Communist Faith. Edited by D. M. MACKINNON. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1953. xii-256 pp. \$4.50.

The Regius Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Aberdeen has here edited a series of studies on Communism as a faith and statements of the Christian faith as the latter bears on Communism. All the authors are members of the Anglican Communion. Some are laymen and some clergymen. One of the authors writes from New Zealand and two from Scotland. All the others write from England, among them three from Oxford and one from Cambridge. All but three are connected with universities, and of these three one is Dr. Toynbee, another is the Bishop of Chichester, and the third is of the College of the Resurrection, Midfield. This means that both the churchmanship and the scholarly character of the book are unimpeachable.

Books with such a purpose are timely. We need again and again to ask why so much of the modern world, including especially large numbers in what was once Christendom, has been estranged from Christianity; why it is that the greatest single challenge to Christianity in this century, Communism, had its origin in Western

Christendom, and wherein lies the power of Communism. This book does not address itself directly to all these questions, but it provides material toward their answer. A careful reading cannot but prove rewarding to those, particularly Christians, who wish competent but not necessarily polemic descriptions of Communism as seen by Christians and of the Christian faith on the issues on which it is most challenged by Communism.

After brief prefaces by the editor and the Bishop of Chichester, H. A. Hodges, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Reading, leads off with an unusually clear and compact essay on the thought of Karl Marx. He points out that Marx was stimulated by Hegel to seek a structure for history in which the many detailed facts of the human record would fit into place, but that he rejected much that was basic in Hegel and that he found in Feuerbach what he deemed the clue. The result was Marx's "dialectical materialism." In it there was nothing of Hegel's philosophy except the dialectical method. Hodges goes on to describe what is meant by Marx's dialectical materialism and declares that part of its strength lies in the comprehensive picture which it professes to give of the world and the universe and in its demand for the whole-hearted allegiance of men. He regards the appeal of Marxism over against Christianity as lying in the seeming greater ease with which it finds a place for modern science and for social and economic realities than does the Christian doctrine of the world and man.

The second essay, by the editor and a colleague in the University of Aberdeen, a lecturer in economics, seeks to outline the development of Marxism by Lenin and Stalin and to suggest possible lessons for the Western world from the experience of Russia with that system. The authors take up Lenin's conception of imperialism and his emphasis upon power and the seizure of power by the Party as a means of achieving the Revolution. They go on to describe the further stress given by Stalin to the place of the Russian Party in effecting the world Revolution.

The authors are of the opinion that Britain has little to learn from the Russian experiment and that in some respects Russian economic theory is archaic and not as nearly in touch with realities as is Keynesian economics. They speak favorably, probably more than the facts warrant, of the Russian success in overcoming racial frictions. They note the terrific cost in lives of the enormous progress in industrialization, comparing it with the somewhat similar cost in Britain during the early stages of the Industrial Revolution under free enterprise. They discuss the possibilities of other nations living at peace with Russia and point out that Stalinist theory might well authorize aggressive war if it is deemed to promote the Revolution. They see in Communist ethics a serious weakness in the system, but say that because of the specious appeal to several different groups, we who are opposed must offer what "is of more lasting worth."

Then follows a section on the philosophical issues raised by Marxism. Its first essay is on truth and truthfulness. It points out the fashion in which Marxism "destroys integrity as the personal responsibility of the thinker for and to his thought and his world." The second essay is on historical materialism. It discusses the agreement of Marxism and Christianity on several important points and their disagreement on central issues. The third essay, on "social clockwork and utilitarian morality," says that Communism does not have a different conception of social good from that held by Socialism, but is wedded to a particular theory of how Socialism is possible, and it assesses the strength and the weakness of that theory.

The third section, on the faith of the New Testament, contains a single essay

and is an admirable statement, among other things giving some of the basic ways in which that faith differs from Marxism.

The fourth section, on the Christian understanding of life and destiny, has, as is proper when dealing with Marxism, an essay on the measure of man, summarizing the contrasts between the Marxist and the Christian views; an essay on the Christian conception of social justice, fresh and stimulating; another on the Christian understanding of history, by Toynbee, brief and in content what we have learned to expect from the author, and a final one on the Christian hope.

The last section is made up of two essays, one on Christian and Marxist dialectic, and the other on prayer, worship, and life, both by the editor. The volume ends with a brief selected bibliography.

The book is not large in size, but it is solid meat and is to be approached only by those who are prepared to engage in careful, honest thought. It does not indulge in wholesale condemnation of Communism, but partly for that reason it is all the more weighty in its analysis of the weakness as well as the strength of that ideology. It also states clearly the Christian faith both in its kinship with Marxism and in its fundamental differences from it.

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The Great Tradition of the American Churches. By WINTHROP S. HUDSON. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 282 pages. \$3.75.

It has been quite some time since a book as provocative, stimulating, and potentially polemic as this volume by the Professor of the History of Christianity at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School has appeared. If the challenge to combat on the one hand and to "renewal" on the other is accepted, this book may well become what the author seems, almost prayerfully, to hope it may become—a turning point in the long-trodden path toward the secularization of both the civil and religious life of America. Few thoughtful readers will be able to avoid taking a stand for or against the thesis erected by Dr. Hudson. The very "undue bluntness" for which he apologizes in the Foreword only adds excitement and power to the treatment.

An outstanding student of American Christianity, a sincerely devoted exponent of the "free church" principle, Dr. Hudson here reveals himself an earnest man, deeply concerned about and involved in the fact that the churches are "losing the distinctive note of the Christian gospel and the distinctive quality of the Christian life."

The general thesis is that "the voluntary principle in religion has been the great tradition of the American churches." The past tense is no accident. Dr. Hudson believes this "great tradition" to have been widely repudiated in the past half century. Convinced that this must not go unchallenged "without a voice having been raised . . . on religious grounds," he sets himself to investigate why and how this has come to pass, what the consequences are and may yet be. The results of his investigation so move him that he is led to suggest approaches and measures toward "renewal" of the churches.

"The Problem the Church Is Facing" is discussed with sober honesty. Americans are "illiterate religiously," "ignorant of theology, beliefs and moral ideals" . . . and "in pathetic default." The churches are "increasingly ineffective, the homes have abdicated their responsibility." This is in marked contrast to a century

ago when the churches, operating on the voluntary principle, motivated by "the prior claim of God upon their existence," actually permeated by "the very springs of belief and conviction" culture and society as a whole. Now "it is no longer possible to distinguish clearly between the gods of society and the God of the church." The "root of the failure" is the "steady secularization of the churches themselves."

Chapters II through VI develop the argument for "the great tradition" of the voluntary church. Its origins are traced. European observers such as Bryce and de Tocqueville attest its pristine power and effect. The happy results of the enforced application of separation of church and state is portrayed by the struggle against and conversion to this principle of Lyman Beecher. Two chapters are used to demonstrate the strength and effectiveness of the voluntary churches in meeting the successive challenges of the frontier and the urbanization of society.

All was not well, however. Moody, whose "great good sense" saved him from the pitfalls of a revivalism which loses its sense of dependence upon and answerability to God, recognized "that the era of the older revivalism had clearly passed, and he began casting about for some other means of introducing people to the Christian life and of winning and holding them for the Christian church." The substitutes were the Sunday School, the Y.M.C.A., the institutional church, the Christian Endeavor Societies, and similar agencies, but these prove to be transitional factors which reveal the end of an era.

"The Princes of the Pulpit" reveal what the new era is to be. Between the new and the old "the real distinction is in mood and in the understanding of the nature of the Christian faith." The new was "the New Theology . . . essentially a culture religion with a single fundamental idea—the doctrine of the Incarnation, interpreted in terms of divine immanence and a superficial understanding of the nature of evolution. . . . Christ was identified with what was conceived to be the finest cultural ideas, the noblest cultural institutions, and the best scientific and philosophical thinking, . . . compatible with every conceivable social attitude, with whatever stream of secular thought one might wish to support and consecrate, with whatever system of values might seem good in the light of one's own personal predilections." Phillips Brooks, Henry Ward Beecher, Russell Conwell, Washington Gladden, George A. Gordon, Lyman Abbott, and Newell Dwight Hillis are "Happy believers in divine benevolence and human goodness, who invest the realm of nature, including man, with intrinsic tendencies toward redemption (quite independently of grace through Christ, except as he was present 'in the spirit of the world' or in 'the compulsion to co-operate')," who "found it difficult to conceive of a church which did not embrace humanity indiscriminately. . . . It was as if God had been 'naturalized,' and invited . . . 'to give a weekly editorial commentary' on the vagaries of a society, in the image of which he had been made."

Accepting the New Theology the American church embraced the world, succumbed to complacency, became a secular institution, evaluated success by material standards. "Never before had the church been materially more powerful or spiritually less effective. . . . 'A process which began with a culture molded by religious faith' was to end 'with a religious faith molded by a national culture.'" The church lost the sense of distinction from and responsibility for the secular.

Dr. Hudson discerns one man who overarched the void created by the New Theology and brought the great tradition of the church to bear within the sociological, cultural, and intellectual framework of the early twentieth century. Walter Rauschenbusch is revealed as a prophet of crisis and judgment who declared, "The

social order cannot be saved without regenerate men." The cause of the crisis is "vast sins," and Rauschenbusch not only defended the doctrine of original sin but expanded it to include "social traditions, customs, and institutions." Awareness of such sin produces repentance and demands redemption. Redemption seems more the "moral influence" type than through atonement. The consequence will be "the Reign of God in a redeemed society of men." The Kingdom "was both a judgment and a promise, both a present reality and a future hope whose final consummation could only be beyond history." Both the individual and society must undergo "death to self to a rebirth in a new life" in which the church must, as far as necessary, stand in "sharp opposition not only to the state but to the whole social life surrounding it." Rauschenbusch's personal tragedy was that "The distinctive and basic elements of his message went unnoticed. . . . He was an evangelical in an era when evangelicalism as a dynamic movement had quite disappeared," and the churches "went their way quite oblivious to his sober words of warning and rebuke."

Then comes the call for renewal of the great tradition in the American churches. Hindrances are "indiscriminate admission of members," lack of "means of preserving the integrity of the faith they profess," the impossibility of "any effective evangelism" in the existent church which includes all humanity. The path back is marked by "the recovery of discipline," "the centrality of Biblical faith," and an acceptance of the fact that the modern panacea of "church union" is no substitute for renewed power and integrity of witness.

"The argument of this book can be briefly summarized. . . . there can be no substitute for a church which seeks to stand apart from the culture with something to say that is distinctly its own, with procedures for group discipline to form a corporate conscience on specific issues, and with an aggressive missionary spirit which will serve to extend its influence." Such a church is made possible by the constitutional provision for separation of church and state. "The Christian character of our American society depends on the churches," which will serve truly when they throw themselves upon God and do an apostolic work.

The reader may get an impression that the author established a thesis and then documented it; he may question the judgments of a Bryce or a de Tocqueville; he may have reservations about the high degree of permeation of American culture by the Christian faith in the nineteenth century; he may resent and reject a rather harsh treatment of the "princes of the pulpit"; he may feel that the author over-emphasizes the threat of secularization in the twentieth century; he may have a suspicion that Rauschenbusch has once more been "reinterpreted"; he may be puzzled as to why additional examples of resistance to the decline are not adduced; he may be disturbed by the absence of suggestions of underlying and empowering motivations for the process of renewal—nevertheless he is not likely to lay aside the central thesis. The argument will disturb and provoke, partially by its basically polemic nature, partially by its incompleteness which tantalizes the attempt to round it out, partially by the very conviction and zeal of the author woven into every phase of its development.

This book may very well "be set for the fall and rising again of many" in America.

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Early Christian Fathers. Edited by CYRIL C. RICHARDSON. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953. 415 pp. \$5.00. (Library of Christian Classics: Volume I.)

Zwingli and Bullinger. Edited by G. W. BROMILEY. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953. 364 pp. \$5.00. (Library of Christian Classics: Volume XXIV.)

Some two years back a great stir of expectancy was created in the religious world by the announcement of an intended series of volumes which would provide the text (in English) with introduction of a "selection of the most indispensable Christian treatises written prior to the end of the sixteenth century." With the appearance in 1953 of the two volumes now under review, *The Library of Christian Classics*, which will number twenty-six volumes when completed, came into existence. At the scheduled rate of four publications per year, the series will be in hand by 1959.

There has for a long time been tremendous need of a single set of books which would give a representative survey of the great body of Christian literature from the sub-apostolic age to the modern era. A large number of bulky specialized "libraries" and of single volumes of illustrative documents have been produced, but nothing has heretofore been attempted that would give such coverage, within easily portable volumes, as this proposed *Library of Christian Classics*. An additional element in its favor, besides the scope of this series and its manageability, is that in a day when the study of foreign languages has been de-emphasized this material is now readily available in the English language. These are all to be fresh translations, and the use of the modern idiom with its attendant renewed interpretation will for the larger part render the thought of the writer more meaningful to our day. The general editors of this *Library* are men of eminence in the religious field: John Baillie, Principal of New College in Edinburgh; John T. McNeill, Auburn Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary in New York; and Henry P. Van Dusen, President of Union Seminary. Their selection of editors for the several volumes has been as judicious as their choice of the treatises to be included. Particularly are these general editors to be commended for their not always looking for the "big name"; a number of the translator-editors are relatively young and comparatively unknown but possessed of a high degree of knowledge and skill in their special field and on their way to becoming the great church historians of the future.

The first of the present two volumes is a welcome addition to the voluminous recent literature on the Christian writings of the first two centuries. Here are to be found a good number of the Fathers of the sub-apostolic age (*Barnabas*, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, and *The Fragments of Papias of Hierapolis* are omitted), two formal Greek apologies, and selections from *Against Heresies* by Irenaeus of Lyons. The supervising editor of this volume, Cyril C. Richardson, who is Washburn Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, writes a brief and penetrating "Introduction to Early Christian Literature and Its Setting," and edits and translates I Clement, II Clement, the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch, the *Didache*, and the Apology of Athenagoras.

The volume in its totality is, however, a joint effort. Richardson has the co-operation of Professor Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., of the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Mass., who edits and translates Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians,

and the Martyrdom of Polycarp; Edward Rochie Hardy, of the Berkeley Divinity School in New Haven, works over Justin Martyr's First Apology, and the selections from Irenaeus; while Eugene R. Fairweather, of Trinity College, in Toronto, is responsible for editing and translating the so-called Epistle to Diognetus. These are all extremely important documents for both the church historian and the pastor; for here are the first extra-canonical expressions of the received faith, here are the formative beginnings of an organizing Christian Church and incipient formulations of theological thought.

These renditions into English are vigorous and clear, with a few exceptions. Here and there one notices a lack of standardization. For instance, in the opening sentence of I Clement we read: "The church of God, living in exile in Rome, to the church of God, exiled in Corinth . . .," while the first words of the Martyrdom of Polycarp are rendered: "The church of God that sojourns at Smyrna to the church of God that sojourns at Philomelium . . ." The same Greek word is translated variously here as "living in exile" and "that sojourns." Of the two, my own preference is toward the more archaic "that sojourns," not because it is of greater antiquity but because it more nearly expresses the meaning of the Greek original and necessitates no explanatory footnote.

To point out, further, that there are a number of misspellings throughout the volume ("apocalpyse" on p. 16, "Byrennios" for "Bryennios" on pp. 16, 40, 161, 167, 168) and to wish that Tertullian's Apology might have been included in this volume (for a presentation of contrasts between Greek and Latin apology in the second century) is simply to indicate that any faults to be found with the books are few and very minor ones, and that this collaborative venture, in a highly conjectural field, is indeed very excellently done. The editors of the several treatises are well read in the critical literature and arrive at no hasty or arbitrary conclusions on the matter of assigning dates and authorship to the documents in question. Their notes and suggestive bibliographies are informative and bring to the reader the fruits of the latest research.

The *Zwingli and Bullinger* volume in this series is translated, with introduction and notes, by the present Rector of St. Thomas' Church in Edinburgh, who was for a number of years (until 1951) a lecturer on Church History and Christian Doctrine at the University of Bristol. The works of these significant Swiss reformers are scarcely found in English. This XXIVth volume of the *Library* provides the scholar and the religionist easy first-hand acquaintance with five representative selections from Zwingli: a sermon entitled, "Of the Clarity and Certainty or Power of the Word of God"; an essay on "The Education of Youth"; a discussion of "Baptism"; a pamphlet in defense of his views "On the Lord's Supper"; and "An Exposition of the Faith," written in 1531 and sent to the French Court in the hope that it might bring an end to the persecution of evangelical communities in that country. Bullinger's "Of the Holy Catholic Church," a sermon which constitutes "the first of the fifth decade of sermons in (his) series on the main aspects of Christian doctrine" (p. 283), is a happy selection for inclusion in this volume, inasmuch as it is as concise and typical an expression of his thought as can be found.

There is greater coherence and uniformity in this second volume of the *Library* for the reason that it is edited by one person; besides, the critical problems to be confronted are fewer. Since Dr. Bromiley is not in the Reformed tradition, he has applied himself to his task with greater dispassionateness and historical acumen than

might otherwise have been the case, even though this may be at the cost of a richer flavor of sentiment and understanding. His long general introduction constitutes a lucid analysis of the two men and their work; shorter introductions to each selection, an appended section of notes and a final bibliography together help make this a very valuable volume.

Our gratitude should be, and is, deep to the general editors of this series of "great books" in the Christian tradition. The two exemplars which it is now our privilege to inspect have justified the hopeful excitement caused by the initial announcement of the publication of these source materials.

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As I Remember. By EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 315 pp. \$3.50.

Professor Goodspeed is one of the bright particular stars in the sky of American scholarship. Throughout the colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Americas, in Europe, and among the institutions of learning in the Near and the Far East, one finds teachers of the New Testament or of the Bible and Religion who "took their work at Chicago under Goodspeed." The list of men and women now occupying important chairs in the educational world or filling important posts in the preaching and pastoral ministry is most imposing. It is like Deissmann's famous dedication to the graduate students who had been members of his seminar at Berlin, or to the list of men who studied with Sanday at Oxford. It is impossible to sum up his contribution in a sentence, or put one's finger on one page of the record and say, "This explains it." His contribution has been manifold and varied, as varied as his own personality and interests.

Chiefly, of course, he has been an interpreter of the New Testament—first interpreter and then translator; for the tireless zeal and passionate enthusiasm of the scholar, in focusing exactly and to the millionth of an inch upon the meaning of the Greek text, *before* putting anything into English, is one of Goodspeed's great qualities. (The popular misconception, viz., that translation is merely paraphrasing what other men have said, from Wycliffe down, with a wide-open opportunity to introduce current interpretations, theological or other, into the text—this silly idea is simply anathema to a real scholar.)

In the next place, the translation which bears his name, though he himself called it *An American Translation*, was the work which did most to turn the tide and introduce readers of the Bible to the idea that a translation *could* be done in current American English, without sacrificing beauty of style, reverence for the sacredness of the Book, or the searching penetration of its message. Goodspeed simply assumed that a book written in everyday first-century Greek could be best represented in the language of today, without archaism or obscurities due to the repetition of antique and long disused phrases. In its original form (Goodspeed always insists that the New Testament was a *Greek* book!) it could be understood by anyone—dockhand, farmer, shoemaker, soldier, judge, housewife, or scholar, throughout the far-flung Mediterranean world of the opening centuries of the Roman Empire. Anyone who could read Greek could read the New Testament. Soon translations appeared, the Old Latin and the Old Syriac, both about A.D. 150, it seems. These also were

in the common language of the time. No one needed a glossary of antique words in order to understand what lay before him in these versions, or in the original Greek. Why should the same not be true of the New Testament today, as translated in a language "understood of the people" of America in the twentieth century?

Our friends who argue that no one should ever tamper with the sacred King James text do not realize that it *has* been tampered with, and that the copies they read are not identical with the 1611 King James; nor that no one in 1611 had to use a glossary to read the new version; nor that the Bible is on a different level from that of Chaucer or of Shakespeare—the Bible is read for something more than "self-cultivation in English."

These, I should say, are the three main achievements of Dr. Goodspeed, among the many for which his friends are grateful: his lifetime of creative teaching, especially as a teacher of teachers; his indefatigable research in the areas of lexicography, papyrology, the stuff dictionaries are made of, in brief the meanings of Greek words and phrases and the elucidation of ancient Greek thought; his unflagging courage and devotion to the idea of an American translation of the Bible, quite distinct from the *English* English of the Revised Version and of more than one of the numerous "modern" translations. These are permanent contributions, ploughed deep into the religious life and thought of America and of the world. Centuries from now his name will still be on record in the long "annals of the English Bible."

I have put my appraisal first, before mentioning the autobiography; for I have enjoyed his friendship for many years, and my estimate of his achievement is not based on the book! In fact, one could not draw such an estimate from the book—its author is too modest. It is the man who makes the book interesting, not the book the man. What he has given us in his autobiography is a charming, indeed fascinating tale of his life and work, with many sidelights upon persons, places, institutions, events—the early days of the University of Chicago, the men and their ideals that shaped the great university in the heart of this continent, the pursuit of manuscripts for the fine collection which he founded there, above all the thrilling adventure of translating the New Testament and all the foolish opposition the translation encountered.

There are pages and pages of sheer delightful recollection, all suffused with a lambent, flashing insight into the innermost recesses of pomposity and pretense: e.g., the newspaper editor who warned his readers to avoid the new translation, inasmuch as no one could possibly improve upon such a sublime utterance as "Blessed are the pure in spirit!" Or the ridiculous editorial in a famous newspaper, lampooning the "Chicago" Bible for translating "lamp" instead of "candle"—as if candles were used in ancient times. Or the hugely funny person who wanted to know how Dr. Goodspeed would revise the U. S. Constitution or the Gettysburg Address, whose request E. J. G. offered to gratify if only the gentleman would supply him with the Greek originals!

There is no bitterness in these tales—the events are long past, and the victory of the principle involved is everywhere acknowledged. Witness the enormous success both of the American Translation of the complete Bible and more recently the Revised Standard Version—which Dr. Goodspeed himself shared in producing. But the stories are told with gentle humor and with such utter absence of personal pride or vested interest—let alone injured feelings—that even the misguided critics can now enjoy the account of their follies. Surely they belong among the follies of the fabulous twenties!

The book is dedicated to "the heroine of the story"—that gracious lady whom everyone loved, and whose personal charm, brilliance, friendliness, hospitality, and Christian character impressed not only the eminent and the famous who came to visit the University, but also hundreds of students, through the years, whose days of study and hard work were brightened by the frequent hospitality of the home where she presided.

FREDERICK C. GRANT

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The Kingdom of God. By JOHN BRIGHT. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 288 pp. \$3.75.

The judges who gave to the author of this book the Abingdon-Cokesbury Award made no mistake. John Bright—Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.—has produced a treatment of a central biblical theme which is both outstanding and unusual. His stated purpose is to show that the idea of the Kingdom of God "so dynamic and creative, is the unifying note of the biblical Word" (p. 244). He begins with Jesus' preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom, and comes back to it after traversing the story of Israel's religion from the Conquest to the Maccabean revolt, having "opened a subject as wide as the Old Testament faith itself" (p. 19).

The author has three qualifications for this task. He is a sound scholar, abreast of the work of his Old Testament colleagues, and able to think for himself and to justify his views. Second, he is a wholehearted believer in the biblical gospel and—with all her faults—he still loves and is committed to the Church. And, third, he can write. The reader is carried along by his pleasant, clear-flowing style, his interesting and suggestive thought, his patent eagerness to bring home his message and underline its relevance. The book is a kind of running commentary on biblical religion (with "running" to be taken literally!). The effect is sometimes breathless, and the style in places breezy. This is theology written in fresh air and sunlight; not a bad way to write theology, and as refreshing as it is unusual.

The work is well planned. The thesis is stated in the Preface: that the unifying theme of the Testaments is that of a People of God called to live under his rule. "Development is undeniable, but it must be viewed . . . as a development outward from a concept which was normative in Israel's faith from the beginning" (p. 11). The author then moves step by step through the Old Testament story, beginning with the conquest of Canaan by tribes who already believed themselves, in the light of the Exodus deliverance, to be a peculiar people of their God. The establishment of the monarchy and its temple seemed a concrete realization of God's Kingdom, but the prophets would not allow such an identification. The emphasis shifted from the nation as such to a pure remnant, a people of God within the nation, and eventually to a new kind of Israel composed of individuals who have become members of a new covenant. The theme of a People of God had its roots in Mosaic faith, it was shaped by the blows of history and by the prophets' word. In the end it produced in Judaism the "holy commonwealth which kept the law," and on the other hand the lively expectation of a coming Kingdom which in Jesus became present fact.

"Whereas in the Old Testament . . . these two aspects of the Kingdom (as present fact and as future consummation) are held in balance, in Christ they are

brought together" (p. 237). "Jesus thus claimed to be the expected representative . . . of the true Israel, the People of God" (p. 202). "In the person and work of Jesus the Kingdom of God has intruded into the world" (p. 216), and "those who have obeyed the call of Christ are his true church, and heirs of all the promises given to Israel" (p. 224).

Bright's book is thus a lively and timely study of the correlative ideas of Church and Kingdom. As such it is a significant contribution to the theological exploration which undergirds the contemporary ecumenical movement. But it is two other things as well—a sound critical evaluation of Old Testament history and religion, and a ringing manifesto of biblical faith. There are, of course, places where the author's views are open to question in matters of interpretation, as for example, where he argues from the assumption that the "Servant poems" are integral to the thought of II Isaiah (pp. 147ff). But it would be difficult to better his treatment of the total Old Testament material as an informed, consecutive, and illuminating discussion. Alternative views are fairly presented, and the writer's own judgments stated firmly but without undue dogmatism. Some excellent summaries and definitions are natural by-products of Bright's firm grasp of his subject coupled with his gift of clear and vivid expression.

It may seem a petty criticism to draw attention to some defects of the author's virtues: his occasional overly rhetorical sentences, his tendency to use as adjectives nouns like "prophet," and the curious mannerism which designates apocalyptic literature as "the Apocalyptic." A few misprints have escaped the proofreader (pp. 43, 52, 60, 82). Some will feel that Bright slips too easily from the role of scholarly interpreter into that of popular preacher, and that his eloquence lapses too often into colloquialism. If so, these are small imperfections in a book which no reviewer will be tempted to skim, and which many reviewers will wish they themselves had been able to write. It is a book which will be of permanent value in the libraries of ministers and theological students, and which many a layman will find speaks theology in a tongue he can understand.

R. B. Y. SCOTT

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The Gospel of the Spirit. By ERNEST CADMAN COLWELL and ERIC LANE
TITUS. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 190 pp. \$2.50.

The Gospel and the Gospels. By JULIAN PRICE LOVE. New York: The
Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 191 pp. \$2.75.

The Gospel Before Mark. By PIERSON PARKER. Chicago: University of Chi-
cago Press, 1953. ix-266 pp. \$6.50.

1. These three works have only one thing in common: they are all studies in the Gospels. The Colwell-Titus volume is a fresh and stimulating exposition of the Gospel of John. It points out that this Gospel is not a biography, is not essentially philosophical though it contains an element of Gnosticism akin to Hermeticism, is not for the intelligentsia though it is for the cultured and thoughtful, and is not ritualistic. It is the presentation of Jesus Christ as the Spirit of God, an early interpretation of the historical Jesus of Nazareth from whose career the ephemeral aspects have dropped away to leave "even more luminous the inner spirit of Jesus."

Yet, it is stressed, this Gospel "is true to the essential facts of the Jesus of history" and is an interpretation of the *historical* figure. There is continuity between the man of Nazareth and the divine subject of this Gospel; indeed, it may

be said that the authors have presented an interpretation of the Synoptic Jesus with the halo formed by the Fourth Gospel. A main point of the latter is said to be "the descent of the Spirit at the baptism;" yet this may call for debate since the story of the baptism has no place in this Gospel and was probably omitted by design. "Incarnationism" there was, but the Fourth Gospel implies that this took place at Jesus' birth; though the authors are certainly correct in observing here no specific "theory of a supernatural birth." They correctly interpret that "Jesus' death releases the Spirit into the world," bridging the two worlds of spirit and flesh.

A few general theological phrases have no exclusive relevance to any one Gospel; e.g., "an invasion of history by God himself" (p. 16), "Jesus is an extension of God into human history" (p. 16). No point is made of "realized eschatology" although a few phrases suggest it. "John has interpreted the parousia in terms of the immanent spiritual Presence in the community" (p. 50), "eternal life is a present possession" (p. 140). But the central theme is twofold: Jesus is the Spirit of God, and he is the revelation of God to man ("He who has seen me has seen the Father"). This is a valuable and clear statement of "things new and old" about the cherished Gospel of John and it is good thus to increase its applicability to "religion in life."

2. The volume by Love deals with all four Gospels and is concerned to show "at once the many types of theology and the one central faith that make up the gospel." The Perry Bible Lectures of 1952 are here supplemented with recent articles from the *Journal of Bible and Religion*, to present to laymen the results of Synoptic research. Familiar theological characteristics of the Gospels serve to classify them in an artificial pattern, though these classifications are not sufficiently discriminating. The Gospels of Luke and Matthew are grouped together because of their ethical teachings, but their important differences on this point are disregarded. The three Synoptics are grouped together for their "compassionate ministry," though this very quality distinguishes Luke from the other two. Mark and John are grouped together for their "realism," but surely difference between them is greater than resemblance on this point. The author's broad and general classifications may obstruct the layman's learning of the more accurate distinctions of the individual Gospels. The chief objection here is that the "gospels" referred to in the several classifications are no gospels at all, nor even source documents for the Gospels. Each of the four Gospels has its own complete and distinctive quality, and if studied as a unit would best convey its spiritual message.

3. The Parker volume is a study in the Synoptic problem, and presents a novel solution. It is not concerned with the oral tradition, but postulates a pre-Markan Aramaic gospel. This gospel before Mark is a new, hypothetical, Palestinian gospel (K) of about A.D. 55. It was first composed in Aramaic, probably by Matthew, and then roughly translated into Greek in the East. It was a Jewish-Christian, anti-Pauline gospel later revised at the instigation of Peter in Rome, by Mark who excised the pro-Jewish elements in order to produce the "pro-gentile" canonical Mark. The excised pro-Jewish material (Palestinian), called M, is another hypothetical entity, not a separate, written document and not a source for any other Gospel. Parker would revise Streeter's theory of Gospel sources by proposing that "Matthew" used, not Q and Mark and M, but "Antiochean" Q and the original Matthew's K (comprising Mark and Greek M), not excising the Jewish element M which included the "testimonia." Mark was a revision of the document K (oiné), a common source for both Mark and Matthew. It is still held that Luke used Mark and Q, all three of which are considered pro-gentile. However, Q was mediated through a Proto-Luke, which contained also the L material (cf. Streeter).

Parker's theory is described on the jacket as simple, but few theories could be

more intricate. It is certainly not explained simply, and if our previous paragraph is clear—and accurate—this was not easily achieved. But Parker has spread a wide net, indeed, and has tried to relate and test his hypothesis on all sides. He has performed a prodigious task. Furthermore, we must recognize that he proposes the first substantial revision of Synoptic theory in thirty years. Certainly Streeter's is not the last word; yet the reviewer is not persuaded to accept Parker's revision.

The literary problem is related to the Jewish-Gentile controversy and the various documents are interpreted as missionary messages on one side or the other. The keystone of the argument is the primitive gospel K, but it is not clear why there should be a K at all. It is said to lie back of Mark; yet in it, besides Markan materials, there are only left-overs which constitute a non-documentary discard (M) which is not even used directly in Matthew. It does not appear why this K complication serves the purpose better than Streeter's M. If the author should reply that the existence of M is demonstrated by his several criteria, it may be suggested that the initial hypothesis is so cast as to pre-judge the several subsequent tests.

Part III considers the reason for Mark's abridgement of K, and seeks to answer by studying what Mark discarded (M). But it has already been assumed that Mark is pro-gentile and that K in addition had pro-Jewish material (M) which later passes into Matthew directly from K. By this very assumption it must be found, in Part III, that M is pro-Jewish and that Mark excised this material because he was pro-gentile. Thus at numerous points the argument is circular, and the categories of thought too rigid and artificial. By all means, this serious volume shows ingenuity and industry, and the reviewer can express only an initial and tentative and personal impression. Parker's work and its presentation should be submitted to a full and fair examination, lest our habitual thinking obscure a genuine contribution. Certainly it would have been better to use the original Greek to exhibit the data, rather than the Revised Version in English. This is hardly a book for the layman, and will be found difficult for the scholar. Numerous points of challenge must here be foregone and we may hope for a fuller and clearer explication of the written word.

KENNETH WILLIS CLARK

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Christian Faith and Natural Science. By KARL HEIM. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953. 256 pp. \$3.50.

For the theologian of a certain type, Heim's *Christian Faith and Natural Science* will seem at first a staggering book. Yet, if he will open his mind and humbly divest himself of prejudice, he will find it leading to new avenues of faith and rich with substantiations not so much for his dogmatic orthodoxies as for his essential religious experiences. Such a book is of the utmost importance for the present theological situation if religious thought is to profit by recent discoveries.

A revolution has taken place in scientific thinking which has destroyed utterly the foundations of a time-worn materialism. The importance of this fact is likely to be missed by the average ecclesiastic for two reasons. First, he has so long felt the bitter opposition of materialistic and supervocal scientists, that he will suspect advanced scientists as "Greeks bearing gifts" and may allow his prejudices to continue railing against science because it has become habitual and easy. In the second place, these prejudices may have kept him from any effort to learn what was really happening in scientific thought. The smoke of old controversies besmirks the

atmosphere and the form of words commonly used has come to mean more than the substance. In this predicament the attempt has been made to patch up a theological lingo assumed to have been "once delivered," which by patching will make transition to new ideas more in keeping with facts without the pain of admitting that any old ideas have been superseded.

The times are ripe for a rehabilitation of Christian thought which will acknowledge the universal authority of truth wherever discovered, and seek at first hand the primary gospel message. The weakening tension of a belief in a God so Absolute as to be incapable of participation in a free and living world, much less of creating it without transgressing his own character, demands a new interpretation. In the interest of maintaining a fictional and philosophical description of the Absolute, the main doctrine of Christianity, the importance and possibility of the Incarnation of God in the flesh, has been practically abrogated. Abrogated through being robbed of its original significance, while being at the same time vocally maintained. This is the fact which Christian theology must face with the present aid of scientific discovery. These are the questions with which the author deals.

Dr. Heim asks if it is possible to believe in a God of miracles, and answers "yes"—not as a breach of his own creative laws, but rather as the condition of all life, which springs from the continuously active Divine Will. The main question then becomes that of the contrapuntal character of immanence and transcendence, to which we have our most direct clue in the experience of the ego. Here the most significant experiences take place in a nonobjective space. This is true to a certain degree even in our objective world, for what is impermeable to us is shot through with cosmic rays which find no barriers and intermingle in a space all their own. In discovering the inadequacy of the Euclidian geometry in managing many of the operations of industrial life, the scientist has come upon a new concept of space resting upon the activities of the mind itself. We make our own spaces, depending upon the point of view taken with its corresponding set of co-ordinates, and this is the commonplace of scientific practice.

Thus has been disclosed a nonperceptual or nonobjective space as real as any but depending upon the existence of persons. Our chance of communication with each other rests upon our human capacity to advance upon the spacial concept shared with the animals to the supraspacial concepts shared by human minds, and in the highest sense rising to the still higher degree of understanding of what might be termed the field of spiritual energy, devotion to the will of God.

The newly realized significance of this fact, the author calls a turning point in the history of thought. So long as we continue on the level of objective space alone, we are simply physical bodies, each ruled from within, with conflicting interests, desires, and understandings—which is, by and large, the present state of the world of conflict. These must be transcended mentally if we are to work for common bodily interests. Complete co-operation and communication are achieved only as we rise to the higher space concept centered in the concept of obedience to the will of God. Thus we escape relativism and positivism through the sense of "inner mission," receiving the Creator's sanction. The Cosmic Ego becomes the meeting point of all lesser egos, the space of the unescapable God. I seek God no longer in the spacial firmament but in my own heart, and this voice I must obey. "Can science see this?" he asks. His answer is "no." It comes by revelation of the Divine Spirit.

The importance of this thought to the world situation is well illustrated by referring to the experience of the people of Nias.

"This idea of the inescapable presence of God achieves its perfect form of expression in Psalm 139 . . . 'Thou hast beset me behind and before. . . . If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in the world of the dead, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there thy hand shall lead me and thy right hand shall hold me.'

"On the island of Nias during the time of the First World War, an awakening, which is still remembered in Indonesia as the unforgettable 'great repentance' was brought about when an entirely primitive people, a savage tribe of head-hunters, quite suddenly and in a manner which . . . cannot be explained at all in terms of the psychology of religion, were filled with the idea expressed in this Psalm, so that the entire life of this tribal community was radically transformed." (p. 166)

This book is too great to be summed up and its importance made clear even in so extended a review as this. It is not a book for the lazy-minded or the bigot. At times the author is so meticulous in reporting contrasting views that the reader may become confused, as, for instance, in the first twenty-three pages which may mislead the careless reader as to the purport of the book. But to the thoughtful reader it will become a powerful confirmation of the essentials of the Christian faith, a book no earnest Christian can afford to miss.

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The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church. By LESSLIE NEWBIGIN. New York: Friendship Press, 1954. 178 pp. \$2.75.

In this volume Lesslie Newbigin, (Scottish born, Presbyterian, with English schooling and missionary experience of many years in India, now one of the Bishops of the most representative Church in the world) deals effectively with that concept of the Church which his title suggests. His answers are decidedly biblical, yet decidedly unconventional. But they grow out of the realities of his own spiritual pilgrimage and from the spiritual revolution which brought together into one church the Reformed, Congregational, Methodist, and Anglican communions to constitute the largest and most rapidly growing non-Roman body in Asia—the Church of South India.

One with missionary as well as ecumenical background cannot fail to thrill at the directness of Newbigin's approach and the keenness of his insights. An example of the latter appears in his assertion that "there can be no true ecumenical movement except that which is missionary through and through, for there can be no true doctrine of the Church which is not held, so to say, in the tension of urgent obedience between the Saviour and the world he came to save."

For him the congregation, the "actual visible community, a company of men and women with ascertainable names and addresses, is the Church of God." Through it men and women are introduced to Jesus Christ, "ingrafted" into him. The three historic conceptions of the Church with which he deals represent three different answers as to how that incorporation takes place. "The first answer is . . . by hearing and believing the Gospel; the second . . . by sacramental participation in the life of the historically continuous Church. The third is . . . by receiving and abiding in the Holy Spirit."

He is critical of the Reformed tradition for permitting the "virtual disappearance of the idea of the Church as a visible unity," ignoring "the whole pattern of the biblical record whose center is the story of a people." He points out that "we do not find that our Lord first laid down a compendium of doctrine and then invited those who believed it to form an association. . . . The personal fellowship and the doctrine were given together."

He is critical of the Catholic position for insisting that "the Church can exist only where the succession has continued unbroken," because this ignores the fact that "the substance of the covenant (of God with His people) is pure mercy, and that God retains His sovereign freedom to have mercy upon whom He will and to call 'No people' His people when they that are His people deny their calling by unbelief and sin." He finds the stress on "order of the flesh rather than of the Spirit. . . ." Because "when the Church claims to have the plenitude of grace of itself, it has abandoned the Spirit for the flesh."

It is not sufficient to stress mainly message as does the traditional Protestant position, nor to exalt mainly structure as does the Catholic. He therefore turns to the tradition which stresses the new life in the Spirit. Hence the "Church is, in the most exact sense, a *koinonia*, a common sharing (in community) of the Holy Spirit." So, says Newbigin, "what I have called the Pentecostal Christian has the New Testament on his side when he demands first of all of any body of so-called Christians, 'do you have the Holy Spirit? For without that all your credal orthodoxy and all your historic succession avails you nothing.'"

This leads to the conclusion that the so-called Catholic-Protestant dilemma is a false one. The Church "cannot surrender the central affirmations either of the Catholic or of the Protestant . . . but the Church lives neither by her faithfulness to the message nor by her abiding in one fellowship with the apostles; she lives by the living power of the Spirit of God."

When it comes to Christian unity, there must be no evasion of the implications of this, "no suggestion that we can acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit and yet deny the fullest Christian fellowship as though our church rules were stricter than those of God Himself."

His concluding paragraph is: "Our task is, firstly, to call upon the whole church to a new acceptance of the missionary obligation to bring the whole world to obedience to Christ; secondly, to do everything in our power to extend the area of cooperation between all Christians in the fulfillment of that task, by seeking to draw into the fellowship of the ecumenical movement those who at present stand outside of it to the right and to the left; and thirdly, to press forward unwearyingly with the task of reunion in every place, until all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus are visibly united in one fellowship, the sign and the instrument of God's purpose to sum up all things in Christ, to whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit be all the glory."

HENRY SMITH LEIPER

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Mandate to Humanity. By EDWIN MCNEILL POTEAT. New York: The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 238 pp. \$3.75.

We are fortunate in having many excellent scholarly studies of Hebrew Law. One of the best is J. M. P. Smith's *Origin and History of Hebrew Law*. Any

study which deals with the Pentateuch is bound to get into the meaning of what is called the Mosaic period in Hebrew life. For Moses is their lawgiver *par excellence*. This is especially true in the E document in the Pentateuch since, for it, all history prior to Moses is anticipating him and all history since is remembering him.

Scholarly research has done much to bring Hebrew law, especially the Decalogue, to life again. Too often our regard for the Ten Commandments has been centered more on the supernatural mode of their deliverance than on their probing meaning for life. Books that will help us understand the living quality of the Decalogue in our time are always at premium.

Dr. Edwin McNeill Poteat has given us one of the best in his *Mandate to Humanity*. It is rich in reliable scholarship. It gives the reader confidence in the author's thoroughness as he works his way patiently into an earlier and quite unfamiliar period, seeking to make it vibrant with life for us today. It underscores what ought to be, but, unfortunately, is not a truism: the man who preaches "the Bible" must be a top-notch biblical scholar. Many a man making that claim is utterly and demonstrably unfamiliar with either or both the language of the Bible and the scholarly literature which interprets the Book. Read Dr. Poteat's book and you will hail him a "Bible preacher" with complete confidence.

In a sense, *Mandate to Humanity* is a tract for our times. Actually it had to be written. One of the characteristics of the drift toward paganism and secularism in our time is a loss of all sense of the reality of moral codes. Yet it is not enough merely to bewail the drift; a way must be found to arrest it. Dr. Poteat believes that a re-emphasis upon and a deeper understanding of the permanent meanings of the Decalogue will do this. His book is convincing testimony that he is right.

If Dr. Poteat carries on a running battle with Marxist ideology almost to the exclusion of the paganism in non-Marxist countries, it is because of the clarity and power of the Marxist challenge. So far as I can see every challenge he puts to Marxism can be put with equal vigor and point to the materialistic ideologies "uttered or unexpressed" that are to be found on every hand in the good old U.S.A. And we preachers should be as careful to do the latter as the former.

The chapter on "The Right to Justice" is an especially searching one. The one on "The Jealousy of God" makes the best and the most that can be made of a slippery theme. ". . . we do need constantly to be reminded that our God is a flame of fire, not of jealousy setting the torch to hate, but of zeal endlessly brooding in concern over the generations of the earth" (p. 105). The introductory and concluding chapters are as helpful as the ones that deal with specific commandments. ". . . without the activation of love the Ten Commandments are forever inert" (p. 221). "Sinai is too far beyond the horizon for us to see, and if we could see it, its summit would still be mantled by cloud, for no man can see the face of God and live. But it is not too far away to hear. Those who in the din of our troubled times turn an ear toward it will still detect, not the sound of thunder, but a still, small voice, patient and sure, with the undiminished authority of yesterday, today, and forever, saying: 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' " (p. 230f.)

This is a book that every Adult Bible Class in the country could well afford to use as a text for a year's study of the moral foundations of religion. Its maturity of insight, integrity of judgment, and felicity of expression make it one of the finest books to come out in recent years.

HAROLD A. BOSLEY

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The Church and Mental Health. Edited by PAUL B. MAVES. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953. xiv-303 pp. \$4.00.

This book culminates fifteen years of pioneering in the relationships of religion and health by the National (formerly Federal) Council of Churches of Christ in America. Through its Commission of Religion and Health the Council has brought together at regular intervals leaders in the fields of health and religion to explore mutual concerns and resources for the living wholeness we constantly need and desire. There have been many creative discussions and publications through these years whose influence has awakened enlarging interest and built bridges across the chasms to achieve interprofessional teamwork for the health of all.

In this definitive volume the relationships are clarified, extended, and applied to practical situations calling for co-operation in the local church and community. The fourteen authors include distinguished pastors, psychiatrists, and educators who bring their insights together and shape them through face-to-face discussion, criticism, and modification into a statement of 300 pages (with annotated bibliography and index) which attains more unity and continuity than is often found in a symposium. "No one person could have written this book," as the editor observes, "it is the distillation and condensation of much fine scholarship and extensive experience."

As the church's ministry to physical health has been treated elsewhere, and as the incidence of mental illness and emotional distress has been mounting steadily in our time, it was decided to focus this work upon the problems of mental health and the responsibility of the church to serve those who wrestle with them. In varying degrees this means every one of us who live in this "age of anxiety," and to that extent these concerns are as urgent as any we know. The book is addressed to the pastor that he may more adequately help persons achieve maturity and personal health amid the tensions of our world. It is also addressed to physicians and other professions to help them understand and use the resources of the church to foster health of mind within the individual, as well as family and community relationships.

The meaning of mental health is considered from the viewpoint of the physician, of the Christian faith, and of contemporary culture. The potentialities in the Christian community for illness and health are considered with reference especially to the fellowship, rites and ceremonies, preaching and pastoral relations. Ministry to the mentally ill is viewed in the parish as also in the mental hospital. Co-operation of minister and psychiatrist, social worker and psychologist are demonstrated by cases. A strategy for the churches in relation to illness and health is traced through the facilities of the local community, chaplaincy service, and more adequate training for ministers. A psychiatrist writes perceptively of the difficulties and possibilities of fostering the mental health of ministers.

Here is a book to be read from cover to cover and then passed along to your best friends, and a capital way to make new friends among workers of other professions who share the concern for enlarging mental health. It is rich in intelligible theory and practical suggestions for what you can do today in your church and community for healthier living. It may well serve as a text for group discussions in the church and interprofessional seminars in the community. And before it gathers dust on the bookshelf, it will invite rereading for deeper assimilation and readier overflow in the currents of human relations.

PAUL E. JOHNSON

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Book Notices

Two additional volumes of *The Library of Christian Classics* (cf. the review on p. 307) have recently been published by the Westminster Press: Volume VI, *Augustine: Earlier Writings*, edited and translated by J. H. S. Burleigh of the University of Edinburgh, and Volume XIV, *Advocates of Reform*, edited by Matthew Spinka of Hartford, with assistance from F. L. Battles of Hartford and J. K. Cameron of Stirling, Scotland. Each book is priced at \$5.00. The Augustine writings include: "The Soliloquies," "The Teacher" (dialogue with his son), "On Free Will," "Of True Religion," "The Usefulness of Belief," "The Nature of the Good," "Faith and the Creed," "To Simplician—on Various Questions." Each is prefaced by Augustine's later comments on it in the *Retractions*. *Advocates of Reform* includes writings of Wyclif, various Conciliarists, John Hus, and Erasmus. Dr. Spinka's translation of *On Simony*, by Hus, is the first available in English.

Abingdon-Cokesbury has published a beautiful book, *They Built for Eternity*, by Gustav-Adolf Gedat, translated by Roland Bainton. The author, a German, has been active in Christian work in all parts of the world, and gives us as the fruit of his travels an artistically and religiously sensitive interpretation of man's great architectural works, from Ur and Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome, to China, India, Mexico, and modern New York. There are 172 superb photographs in this book of 175 large pages. Price, \$5.00.

Strength for Struggle ("Christian Social Witness in the Crucible of These Times"), by William Howard Melish, is published by the Bromwell Press, 157 Montague Street, Brooklyn, at \$2.75 a copy. It would be a pity if only those on one side of the political fence should read this book of sermons by the younger Mr. Melish, preached mostly from 1950 to 1953. Interspersed are his accounts of the issues involved in the "Melish Case," and of the pioneer work done by the Holy Trinity congregation among young people and adults of shifting interracial population of Brooklyn. What some readers may not expect is the wealth of literary allusion (from *Moby Dick* and Walt Whitman to Dostoevsky, Aldous Huxley, and Arthur Miller), the loving attention to Protestant, English, and American history; and its New Testament emphases are authentic.

Cross Currents is a rather new Quarterly Review "to explore the implications of Christianity for our times," which began its fourth year with the issue of Fall 1953. It was founded by a group of Catholic laymen; it strives for "a healthy diversity of ideas" and seeks to break down "some of the academic and spiritual isolation that persists in America." It reprints, often by translating, much material from distinguished Europeans and writers even further afield (e.g., Buber, Jaspers, Berdyaev, Marcel, Bernanos, Cullmann, Barth, Brunner, S. Weil, Tillich). It treats live issues in the fields of theology, ecumenics, philosophy, literature, psychology, politics. Sample copies are available on request (write Mr. Joseph E. Cunneen, *Cross Currents*, 3111 Broadway, New York 27, N. Y.). Subscription, \$3.00 per year.

Each year Pendle Hill, the Friends' center in Wallingford, Pa., publishes six distinctive pamphlets, and the series for 1952-53 is as usual worthy of notice. Among these are: *The Ministry of Counseling*, by Carol Murphy of Pendle Hill; *Art and Faith*, by artist Fritz Eichenberg (wood engravings by the author); *Science and the Business of Living*, by James Vail, Quaker and chemist; and *The Indian Testimony*, an interpretation of India's approach to peace through nonviolence, by Amiya Chakravarty, now on the faculty of Boston University School of Theology. Single pamphlets are priced at 35 cents; subscription to a yearly series is \$2.00.

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